

STARS AND STRIPES®

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MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2005

50¢

Millions vote despite unrest



JOSEPH GIORDANO
Stars and Stripes

Above: An Iraqi woman casts one of the first ballots Sunday in Ramadi, where security concerns and political infighting kept voter turnout lower than in other parts of Iraq.

- 44 dead in attacks on Iraqi polls
- Bush calls election a success



Below: Spc. Michael Johnson talks to an Iraqi boy as soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, patrol a Baghdad neighborhood during the elections. The photo was taken through the cracked windshield of Johnson's Humvee, damaged that morning when a mortar landed nearby.

JASON CHUDY
Stars and Stripes



(LONDON) DAILY MIRROR/AP

After driving was prohibited, thousands of Iraqis walk to Al Alamara to vote. Election Day violence included some deadly suicide bombings and mortar strikes by insurgents.

- Some Sunnis stay away
- Turnout varies across nation

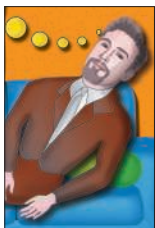
Coverage begins on Page 5



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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Big Dig project: The Massachusetts water authority is investigating whether the Big Dig highway project violated its permit by pumping millions of gallons of water into the regional sewer system.

The \$14.6 billion Big Dig project has a permit from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to pump out 36,000 gallons of water per month from tunnels under Boston. But MWRA records obtained by The Boston Globe show the project has been pumping out a monthly average of 2.2 million gallons.

Suspect in custody: U.S. authorities took custody Saturday of a man who was arrested 4½ years ago in Mexico and accused of killing an undercover federal drug agent, the Drug Enforcement Administration said. Augustin Vasquez-Mendoza is facing a murder charge in Maricopa County, Ariz., for the 1994 slaying of DEA agent Richard Fass.

Vasquez-Mendoza was arrested in central Mexico in July 2000, and the United States had been seeking his extradition ever since. Vasquez-Mendoza was tried on a drug trafficking charge in Mexico, DEA administrator Karen Tandy said. That case concluded late Friday and he was sentenced to time served, Tandy said. "That provided the avenue to extradite him to the United States," she said.

U.S. authorities, who paid \$2.2 million as a reward for his capture, had previously agreed to waive the death penalty and a sentence of life in prison without parole as terms of his extradition, Tandy said.

Illness on cruise ship: About 230 people aboard a cruise ship fell ill with a gastrointestinal illness while on a Caribbean voyage, forcing the trip to end early.

About 200 of the 1,220 passengers aboard the Holland America ship Veendam got sick on the voyage, which ended Friday evening in Tampa, about 13 hours early.

About 30 of the ship's 572 crewmembers also became sick.

Sick passengers were quarantined to their rooms while crewmembers scrubbed banisters, elevator knobs and other areas to eliminate the virus, which spreads easily in close quarters.

World

Bloodshed in Congo: Militiamen carrying guns and machetes killed 16 people last week and kidnapped at least 34 young girls in a series of attacks on a remote area of eastern Congo, the United Nations said.

Two platoons of U.N. peacekeepers arrived in the remote area by helicopter early Saturday to protect the population from further violence, U.N. spokesman Christophe Bouliar said by telephone from Bunia, capital of Ituri province.

U.S. consulate reopens: The U.S. consulate in the Red Sea port city of Jiddah has reopened, seven weeks after an attack on its premises by Islamic militants left nine people dead, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh said Sunday.

Carol Kalin said the consulate reopened Saturday and was providing full services in the western region of Saudi Arabia.

Islamic militants attacked the consulate



General strike: Police detain a woman protester Sunday during the second day of a three-day general strike called by the main opposition Awami League in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Schools and shops were shut down and transportation was disrupted after the killing of five members in a grenade attack at a rally Thursday. The government denied any involvement, condemned the blast and ordered an investigation. Investigators from Interpol were to arrive Monday. Officials also asked the United States for assistance.

Dec. 6 and held civilians at gunpoint. Security forces stormed the compound three hours later, and five foreign consulate employees and four attackers were killed. The consulate halted most activities after the attack, with the embassy in Riyadh assuming some of those responsibilities.

Oil prices stay high: OPEC warned Sunday that oil prices, already hovering near \$50 a barrel, would remain high through the spring, even as the cartel decided to keep its production ceiling at 27 million barrels a day.

The decision, reached at a meeting of the 11-nation group in the Austrian capital of Vienna, offers little solace for consumers worried about the price of heating oil this winter.

Darfur asks for more troops: Rebels in Sudan's western Darfur region called Sunday for the African Union to send more troops to Darfur and give the soldiers the mandate to stop government troops and allied militia from attacking civilians.

The Sudanese government is sending more troops and military hardware to Darfur, continues arming and recruiting Arab militia, known as Janjaweed, and has built airstrips in remote parts of the region to prepare for new offensives against insurgents, said Adam Ali Shoggar, a spokesman for the Sudan Liberation Movement, one of Darfur's two main rebel groups.

Austrian government crisis: Pushing Aus-

trian's government to the brink of collapse, the right-wing Freedom Party on Sunday angrily accused its coalition partner of breaking up the alliance by pushing through reforms aimed at moving the country toward an all-volunteer army.

Uwe Scheuch, the Freedom Party's general secretary, issued a statement saving the center-right People's Party leadership for being "intoxicated by power" and "betraying the party 'busted' the coalition with its 'single-handed' reform attempts."

But Maria Rauch-Kallat, the nation's health minister and a senior People's Party member, played down the threat of a collapse Sunday, telling Austrian radio: "I believe this government will hold."

Abbas visits Russia: Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas was due in Moscow on Sunday for an official visit as part of his first foreign trip since his election earlier this month.

Abbas was scheduled to meet Monday with President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Alexy II. He leaves Russia Tuesday morning.

War on terrorism

Hunt for Taliban chief: Police have gleaned "useful" information from suspected members of Afghanistan's Taliban militia who were arrested in southwestern Pakistan and are being interrogated for clues about Taliban chief Mullah Mohammed Omar, an official said Sunday.

Acting on a tip, police raided several homes in Quetta late Thursday and captured as many as 23 Afghan nationals on suspicion of links with the Taliban and al-Qaida.

Seventeen of the arrested men were allegedly members of the Taliban militia. A U.S.-led coalition ousted the Taliban from power in Afghanistan in late 2001 for harboring terrorists.

British detainees released: Britain made no promises to the United States to release the four Britons from U.S. military detention at Guantanamo Bay, the government's chief legal officer said Sunday.

The comments by Lord Falconer, the lord chancellor, appeared to contradict those of another minister, who said Britain had agreed a "security package" with the United States over the men's release.

Four British detainees who spent up to three years in U.S. custody returned to Britain on Tuesday. British police questioned them briefly and released them without charge.

Military

AF cadet to stand trial: An Air Force Academy senior cadet will stand trial for allegedly raping another cadet during a scuba diving trip.

LT Gen. John Rosa, the academy superintendent, ordered the court-martial of senior Cadet Benjamin Kuster after reviewing evidence from November's Article 32 proceeding, the equivalent of a preliminary hearing. An academy spokesman announced the court-martial on Friday.

A cadet testified that she awoke during the diving club's trip to New Mexico last year to find a man she believed was Kuster sexually assaulting her. He immediately stopped when she spoke to him, she said.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Marina Aldrich cleans the counter Wednesday at what will be Charlie's Steakery when the base exchange reopens at RAF Lakenheath, England, next month after an extensive renovation.

Base exchange at RAF Lakenheath to reopen Feb. 25

BY RON JENSEN
Stars and Stripes

RAF LAKEHEATH, England — The RAF Lakenheath base exchange will open at the end of February after 14 months and \$7.8 million of renovations.

Rob Baker, the store manager, said the store will reopen on Feb. 25. A couple vendors in the expanded food court may need an additional week or two to open.

"It was due," Baker said of the renovation that began in November 2003.

The store now has new wiring and improved lighting, along with new heating and air conditioning units. The vendor areas have been remodeled, and new bathrooms have been installed.

The most obvious change will be to the food court, which will now seat 208 people, a 25 percent increase. Additionally, Charlie's Steakery, which serves grilled made-to-order submarine sandwiches, has been added, along with Cinnabon. Anthony's Pizza, Frank's Franks and Baskin-Robbins will return.

The store will have the same amount of shopping space, Baker said, but the clothing section will be expanded.

Since the exchange closed for the renovation, shoppers have had to travel to RAF Feltwell, about 10 miles down a narrow country road that weaves through a few villages.

The exchange was set up in a

hangar, which, Baker pointed out, "was not designed for retail."

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service made a decision, Baker said, to close the main store completely and move temporarily to RAF Feltwell rather than close the main store in sections while workers made the improvements.

Bruce Creed, the site manager for Mansell Construction of Swaffham, England, the main contractor, said the right decision was made.

"It was ultimately the best way of doing it," Creed said.

He agreed with Baker that doing the project in phases would have doubled the amount of time required to complete it.

Once that decision was made, Baker said, the command made the hangar at RAF Feltwell available and \$9 million worth of merchandise was moved.

"It definitely was an inconvenience to our customers," he said. "You couldn't pop over for lunch and be back at work."

Sales have been off about 7 percent, he said, but the store still did \$4.5 million worth of business during the Christmas shopping season.

The Lakenheath exchange did \$35 million in sales last year, putting it behind those at Ramstein Air Base, Würzburg and Vogelweh in Germany. Baker said he expects to increase the sales figure to \$41 million for 2005.

E-mail Ron Jensen at: jensenr@mail.stripses.osd.mil

Europe materiel brigade to go to Iraq

Stars and Stripes

A newly formed logistics brigade is sending a team to Iraq to better supply troops there.

Army Materiel Command Field Support Brigade-Europe formed in November precisely for "expeditionary" missions — going directly into the war zone and getting to work.

In Europe, the command spent recent days issuing helmets and other gear to soldiers en route to Afghanistan. Its mission in Iraq is much broader, spokesman Chuck Fick said, and includes providing the gear soldiers wear, shoot, drive or even eat.

"What's going forward is what the Army calls an operations command post," Fick said. "At this moment, this is a party that will assess the requirements on the ground, and this is in keeping with the modular nature of the Army now. We will then scale

and tailor the presence based on the needs of the missions."

A team of about 10 people from the Seckenheim, Germany-based unit will arrive in the country first and decide who or what should follow. The brigade numbers about 1,600.

"Although many members of our command have deployed individually, this is the first time we are going as a unit," said Tommy Lane, the brigade's civilian deputy, in a press release.

The brigade's commander said field missions are the reason AMC-Forward and Combat Equipment Group-Europe recently merged.

"This deployment is exactly why the unit was formed on Nov. 18, 2004," said Col. Max Lobeto, brigade commander. "Ours is the first such brigade in Army Materiel Command and is designed to match up with the expeditionary Army."

Derby day at Feltwell



Top: Brian Wolfe, left, and Josh Gunther salute during the Pledge of Allegiance on Saturday at the Pinewood Derby, held by Pack 404 of the Cub Scouts at RAF Feltwell, England. Races are being held around Europe by Cub Scout troops.

Above: Cub Scouts watch as cars race toward the finish line. Right: Zack Peterson, foreground right, watches closely as cars cross the finish line Saturday in the derby.

PHOTOS BY RON JENSEN
Stars and Stripes

Contest postponed

RAF MILDENHALL, England — The U.S. Air Forces in Europe power lifting championships have been postponed until further notice due to lack of competitor registration.

The competition was to be held Saturday at RAF Mildenhall.

Information regarding registration will be made available once a new date for the competition has been set.

From staff reports



Former Army rigger jumps back into service

Retired soldier serves as liaison for SETAF at Aviano Air Base

BY KENT HARRIS
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Martin Fano doesn't jump from airplanes anymore.

But after spending two decades as an Army rigger, he hasn't gotten very far away from military aircraft.

In fact, as F-16s noisily lift off the runway, his office near the flight line is probably a bit too close — and loud — for most people.

Not that he's complaining. "This is the best job I've ever had," he says of his position, which he simplifies as a point of contact between the Army and Air Force in northern Italy.

As an American civilian working for the Army on an Air Force base, Fano is a bit of an oddity. He has dual citizenship, but his British accent stands out. He's a graduate from the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst in England and endured a tour of duty in Northern Ireland in 1979. During stints with the British and American forces, he's been an officer, an enlisted soldier and a warrant officer.

He brings a lot of experience in our air operations," said Lt. Col. Angela Haynes, chief of plans and operations for the 22nd Area Support Group's directorate



KENT HARRIS/Stars and Stripes

Martin Fano, left, a civilian who acts as the liaison at Aviano Air Base for the Southern European Task Force (Airborne), talks with Maj. Andrew Rohling, executive officer of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, before a jump near Aviano last week.

of logistics. "He knows how to put a plan into action."

That's probably a comforting thought to the thousands of paratroopers who will soon be heading to Afghanistan by flying out of Aviano.

"He is the lynch pin for the airborne portion of this deployment," Haynes said.

Fano has had that role before. He was in charge of getting the heavy equipment aboard for the 173rd Airborne Brigade's entry into Iraq in 2003.

At the time, Fano was still in the Army and the chief rigger stationed at Aviano. An amateur photographer, he also documented the movement on film.

He retired as a chief warrant officer 3 in late 2003, capping a 21-year career in the Army. He became a warrant officer in 1994 after advancing to the rank of sergeant first class. He had joined the U.S. Army in 1982 as a parachute rigger, not long after leaving the British army.

Fano, who says he had wanted to become an American citizen, joined the enlisted ranks even though he was an officer in the British forces and a graduate of Sandhurst, the British equivalent of West Point.

In about five years with the British forces, he served in Germany, as well as Northern Ireland, where he led an armored car platoon.

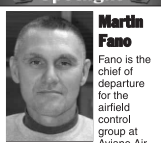
"Basically, escorting infantry guys around," he said. No one in his platoon was killed, but not for a lack of effort by those who wanted British forces out.

Attacks on the convoys came "on a daily basis," he said. "Small arms fire, anything they could throw at us basically."

He spent most of his time in the U.S. Army with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C. with stints in South Korea, Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War and a final tour in Italy.

Fano says his upbringing made military service seem like a natural fit. His father was a salesman for DuPont and the family lived

Stripes Spotlight



Martin Fano

Fano is the chief of departure for the airfield control group at Aviano Air Base, Italy, for the 22nd Area Support Group's directorate of logistics.

Age: 48
Family: Wife, Josephine
Hometown: Harrogate, England

Military service: Twenty-one years as a warrant officer or enlisted member in the U.S. Army following five years in the British army.

Stars and Stripes

in a handful of countries in south and central America. He learned Portuguese — which he's since lost — and Spanish. He started attending boarding schools at the age of 8.

"So I've always been used to sort of a regimented lifestyle," he says. "I saw a lot of chaos in civilian life and I didn't like it."

So how's life out of the military? "Now I'm a civilian," he says. "But I still work out every day. I have a uniform and still feel like a warrant officer."

E-mail Kent Harris at: harris@mail.strips.osd.mil

Some Europe GIs have undergone second post-combat mental exams

BY CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

While the Department of Defense will soon start requiring troops to undergo a series of mental evaluations for post-traumatic stress — both immediately upon returning from Iraq or Afghanistan and up to six months later — many soldiers in Europe have already undergone the evaluations.

The Department of Defense announced the new program last week based on studies that showed that symptoms of mental health problems often occurred after troops returned to their normal routine.

The need for additional testing in Europe arose after soldiers from the Vicenza, Italy-based Southern European Task Force returning from a one-year deployment to Iraq last March.

Upon their return, only 6.5 percent of the soldiers tested positive for symptoms of mental health disorder. The low number didn't seem accurate to the SETAF command, which ordered a new test four months later. The second test revealed that 15 percent of the soldiers showed symptoms.

The U.S. Army Europe ordered similar tests for months later for 1st Armored Division soldiers after they returned from Iraq last summer. Results were similar.

The delayed reaction could be due to a "bubble effect," that is, all the changes that have taken place over the past year finally get a chance to set in, said Lt. Col. Paul Blesse, commander of the Army Medical Research Unit-Europe.

"In a combat situation, it's adaptive to be aggressive and combat-alarmed," Blesse said. "They're kind of expecting to turn that off immediately when they return."

"The mind doesn't work that way. It takes a while for those symptoms to dissipate."

A study by Walter Reed Army Institute of Research released July 1, found that one of every six troops who served in Iraq or Afghanistan showed a symptom of anxiety, depression or other mental health disorder months after their return.

"(Returning troops) might be unconsciously minimizing the stress and trauma they've been through," according to Dr. (Lt. Col.) Steven Knorr, chief of the be-

havioral health division at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

"Then three-to-six months later, (they) might find themselves feeling a little different than they were pre-deployment."

The tests will be given to identify troops experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anger, relationship problems, excessive alcohol consumption and trouble sleeping.

Officials in Europe said they found that troops might not show symptoms immediately after returning home or during 30-day black leave. But if months later they are still scanning rooftops for snipers or taking cover when a car backfires, they should consider talking to someone.

Many times the problem is minor, according to Dr. Kathleen Wright, a psychologist with the Army Medical Research Unit-Europe in Heidelberg, Germany.

"People don't have to suffer needlessly," Wright said. "Many troops" seemed very relieved to be able to discuss it. Even that very brief intervention was helpful."

E-mail Charlie Coon at: coon@mail.strips.osd.mil

Afghan officials launch effort to collect Stingers

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan authorities are launching a new push to collect U.S.-made Stinger missiles left over from the 1980s war against Soviet occupiers, fearing they could end up in the hands of terrorists, an official said Sunday.

The Afghan intelligence service will buy the surface-to-air missiles whether they work or not for an undisclosed sum, state television reported.

Hussein Fakiri, a senior intelligence official, confirmed the TV report but declined to elaborate.

The CIA supplied hundreds of Stingers to mujahideen rebels who used them to devastating effect against Soviet helicopters and transport planes before Moscow pulled its troops out of Afghanistan in 1989.

Since then, the American spy agency has been trying to buy them back to try to keep them out of the possession of terrorist organizations and governments such as Iran, but hundreds are still believed unaccounted for.

Gen. Mohammed Zahir Azimi, a spokesman for the Afghan Ministry of Defense, said authorities had recovered four Stingers as well as other surface-to-air missiles from the south and east under a U.N.-sponsored disarmament program that was launched after the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

Rick Grant, a U.N. spokesman, confirmed that the disarmament program had directed several militia commanders with Stingers toward American officials.

"We've come across commanders who've handed in their SAM-7s and their tanks but were asking, in essence: 'Where am I going to sell my Stingers?'" Grant said.

Maj. Mark McCann, a spokesman for the U.S. military in Kabul, declined to comment on the Stinger buyback. "It's not our program."

According to the TV report, the intelligence service plans a poster campaign to publicize the effort to collect the missiles.

Iraqis vote in first free election despite violence

44 killed in attacks at polls

BY MARIAM FAM
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraqis defied violence and calls for a boycott to cast ballots in Iraq's first free election in a half-century Sunday. Insurgents seeking to wreck the vote struck polling stations with a string of suicide bombings and mortar volleys, killing at least 44 people, including nine attackers.

Women in black abayas whispered prayers at the sound of a nearby explosion as they waited to vote at one Baghdad polling station.

But the mood for many was upbeat. Civilians and policemen danced with joy at one of the five polling stations where photographers were allowed, and some streets were packed with voters walking shoulder-to-shoulder to vote. The elderly made their way, hobbling on canes or riding wheelchairs; one elderly woman was pushed along on a wooden cart, another man carried a disabled 80-year-old on his back.

"This is democracy," said Karfa Abbas, holding up a thumb stained with purple ink to prove she had voted.

Officials said turnout among the 14 million eligible voters appeared higher than the 57 percent that had been predicted, although

it would be some time before any turnout figure was confirmed. No preliminary results were expected before Monday at the earliest, and final results will not be known for seven to 10 days, the election commission said.

Polls were largely deserted all day in many cities of the Sunni Triangle north and west of the capital, particularly Fallujah, Ramadi and Beiji. In Baghdad's mainly Sunni Arab area of Azamiyah, the neighborhood's four polling centers did not open at all, residents said.

A low Sunni turnout could undermine the new government that will emerge from the vote and worsen tensions among the country's ethnic, religious and cultural groups.

In a reminder of the dangers that persist in Iraq, a British C-130 military transport plane crashed north of Baghdad, with the wreckage strewn over a large area, officials said. British Prime Minister Tony Blair said there were British deaths in the crash, but did not say how many. The British version of the C-130 can carry up to 128 passengers; there was no word on how many were on the crashed plane.

Casting his vote, interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi called it



Above: An Iraqi man gets help from a U.S. Army medic Sunday after he was shot in the face by an insurgent near a polling station in Mosul, Iraq. He was rushed to a local hospital and is expected to survive. Right: A member of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq casts his ballot in eastern Ramadi, Iraq.

"the first time the Iraqis will determine their destiny."

With Arabs across the Middle East watching the vote, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak telephoned Allawi to congratulate him on the election, saying he hoped it would "open the way for the restoration of calm and stability."

Prominent Iraqi Sunni politician Adnan Pachachi — who in recent months had called for the vote to be postponed because of violence — told CNN he was "relieved" and "encouraged" by a turnout he said was better than expected, even in Fallujah and Mosul.

Shiite Muslims, estimated at 60 percent of Iraq's 26 million people, were expected to vote in large numbers, encouraged by clerics who hope their community will gain power after generations of oppression by the Sunni minority.

Voting appeared heavy in Shiite and mixed Shiite-Sunni neigh-

borhoods in Baghdad, but low in some heavily Sunni areas.

Sunnis in mixed neighborhoods may have voted in greater numbers there because pressure to boycott was less intense — and chances of retaliation lower because they would not stand out at the polls. There were a few ways by sight to distinguish Sunni and Shiite Arabs.

The election will create a 275-member National Assembly and 18 provincial legislatures. The assembly will draw up the country's permanent constitution and will select a president and two deputy presidents, who in turn will name a new prime minister and Cabinet to serve for 11 months until new elections are held.

The election is a major test of President Bush's goal of promoting democracy in the Middle East. If successful, it also could hasten the day when the United

States brings home its 150,000 troops. One of them, a Marine, was killed in combat Sunday in Iraq's restive Anbar province.

Guerrilla attacks began within two hours of the balloting's start Sunday morning. All but one of the day's suicide attacks came in Baghdad, mostly against polling sites, using bombers on foot with explosives strapped to their bodies since private cars were banned from the streets.

The group al-Qaida in Iraq claimed responsibility for election-day attacks in a Web statement, although the claim could not be verified. A few hours after polls closed at 5 p.m., thunderous explosions reverberated through central Baghdad, though their cause was unknown.

A ticket endorsed by the country's leading Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, is expected to fare best among the 111 candidate lists.

ence in Iraq, but said U.S. forces will continue training and helping Iraqis "so this rising democracy can eventually take responsibility for its own security."

In a statement Sunday, Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy said Bush "must look beyond the election."

"The best way to demonstrate to the Iraqi people that we have no long-term designs on their country is for the administration to withdraw some troops now and to begin to negotiate a phase-down of our long-term military presence," Kennedy added.

Earlier Sunday, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the elections are a first step to a brighter democratic future for a country once held under the thumb of tyranny.

"The insurgency is not going to go away as the result of today," she said, "but the Iraqi people have taken a very important step in losing the sense of fear and intimidation that has been in their lives for decades," under deposed leader Saddam Hussein.



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Bush: Iraq election a success

BY ANNE GEARAN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush called Sunday's elections in Iraq a success and promised the United States would continue trying to prepare Iraqis to secure their own country.

"The world is hearing the voice of freedom from the center of the Middle East," Bush told reporters at the White House on Sunday, four hours after the polls closed.

Bush praised the bravery of Iraqis who turned out to vote despite continuing violence and intimidation. Bush said they "firmly rejected the antidemocratic ideology" of terrorists.

Insurgents struck polling stations with a string of suicide bombings and mortar volleys, killing at least 44 people, including nine suicide bombers.

"Some Iraqis were killed while exercising their rights as citizens," Bush said. He also mourned the loss of American and British troops killed Sunday. "Their sacrifices were made in a vital cause of freedom."

Bush cautioned that the election will not end vio-

U.S. troops report less violence in Baghdad

Neighborhoods in capital city experience high voter turnout

BY JASON CHUDY
Stars and Stripes

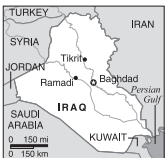
BAGHDAD — There was less violence and more voting.

Tenth Mountain Division soldiers assigned to the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment's said that voter turnout was high in the three Baghdad neighborhoods of Kadhimiya, Shulla and Hurriya, and insurgent attacks were less than expected.

"It's certainly not the level of violence we expected," said 1st Lt. Brian Wood, executive officer for Company C. "It's definitely worse than a normal day, but there are a lot more targets (for insurgents) out there."

Rocket, mortar and gunfire echoed throughout the area all day. None of the battalion's soldiers were injured. But it wasn't quiet everywhere in Iraq's capital and largest city.

In an adjoining sector patrolled by the 91st Engineer Battalion, a man detonated a bomb



AP/Stars and Stripes

at a polling site, killing only himself. Radio reports received by 4-31st soldiers stated that after the attack, Iraqis placed the suicide bomber's head, which was still intact, on his severed foot and passing voters spit on the remains.

Even after some polling stations were attacked, voters would often continue to arrive to cast their ballots.

Soldiers from the battalion,



JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

First Lt. Daniel Hurd, left, and Sgt. 1st Class James Shinholt talk to election officials and Iraqi police officers Sunday at a polling site in Baghdad. The soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment visited a number of polling sites to check on security.

which had 125 polling sites in its sector, were out in force during the entire 10-hour voting period, and they spent more time dodging soccer balls than fighting in-

surgents. The government had imposed a driving ban for all but official vehicles; so most of the city's younger men took advantage of the ban

to set up impromptu soccer fields on the streets, using rocks or sets of shoes as goal posts.

SEE BAGHDAD ON PAGE 8

After a slow start, rural residents get busy voting

BY TERRY BOYD
Stars and Stripes

OMYER AHMAD AS SAMIR, Iraq — Master Sgt. Joseph Lieberman loves coming to the villages on the forlorn plains 30 miles east of Tikrit. The people, says Lieberman, a civil affairs soldier attached to the 1st Infantry Division, are genuine and friendly, unlike the people in the urban areas here near Saddam Hussein's home town of Tikrit.

Even on Election Day.

Like Tikrit, people on the plains are Sunni, and the area is still part of the Sunni Triangle, the most dangerous region for coalition forces. But following the lead of their sheikhs — cultivated by soldiers and officers from the Schweinfurt, Germany-based Troop C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st ID — rural Sunnis apparently voted in droves in Sunday's elections.

Soldiers from 1-4 Cavalry drove across eastern Iraq from Forward Operating Base Wilson near Tikrit, picking up nearly 7,000 ballots in an area with 20,000 residents. "That's better than the U.S.," said Maj. Keith Barclay, FOB Wilson executive officer, said of the voter turnout.

The drive was eerily serene, with no traffic either way on the 60-mile round trip drive because of a nationwide ban of driving Sunday to curb possible suicide car bombings.

As Barclay entered al-Badeiya School, polling place 27 in a village a few miles east of Tikrit, a sheik said 2,500 people have voted in the sparsely populated area.

When Barclay tells the sheik that in Jilam, home to insurgent leader Ibrahim Al-Douri, one person voted, the gaggle of police, soldiers and villagers break out in laughter.

"Well, maybe they didn't have as good a security as you," Barclay said, surrounded by dozens of assault-rifle wielding Iraqi soldiers and police.



PHOTOS BY TERRY BOYD/Stars and Stripes

Above: Maj. Keith Barclay, from left, Master Sgt. Joseph Lieberman and Sheikh Hajim walk from a polling station outside Tikrit, Iraq, after Barclay presented one of the sheik's security personnel with a medal for his contribution to the elections. Right: Sgt. Reyes Terrazas lifts a box of ballots, some of about 2,700 cast in a village east of Tikrit.

It was a rare moment of levity what was otherwise deadly serious business. Al-Douri and other insurgents swore to make the streets run red with blood during the election.

As for Al-Douri, "some people still think he's out here somewhere," said Master Sgt. Steven Ziebarth, non-commissioned officer in charge at FOB Wilson, gesturing toward the dry washes around Omyer Ahmad as Samir.

Though FOB Wilson's area of responsibility was relatively quiet for the election, there were incidents.

On Saturday, a sniper wounded an Iraqi soldier based at FOB Wilson.

Another insurgent tried to put a pipe bomb in a building a few meters from a polling station in Omyer Ahmad as Samir. Iraqi police and soldiers opened up on him, firing hundreds of rounds, but failing to kill him, Ziebarth said. American ordinance disposal soldiers destroyed the bomb, he said.

Soldiers worked hard to cultivate local tribal sheikhs to bolster security and to improve their way through several mass mutinies by Iraqi poll workers.



The busy Iraqi voter monitoring center at FOB Wilson tracked the uneven turnout.

In Ad-Dawir, next to FOB Wilson, three of four Sunni-neighborhood voting stations recorded zero votes as of noon Sunday, while nearby Shiite neighborhoods had moderate turnouts.

But by 9 a.m. — two hours after the voting started, it was clear the sheikhs' areas were swamped with voters.

"I'm really excited about that. I'm really excited in. 'This is really a big deal.'"

As his soldiers picked up ballots, Barclay said he's confident that the votes are legitimate because the sheikhs involved have always been reliable. "We've worked with them since Day One."

As the 14-soldier team prepared to leave FOB Wilson at about 2 p.m. to pick up ballot boxes, Barclay reminded the soldiers the job was almost finished.

"There's been a lot of stress," he said. "When we get the ballots back to FOB Wilson, then it will have been a successful election."

E-mail Terry Boyd at: boyd@mail.strips.osd.mil

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JOSEPH GIORDONO/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. LaTasha Boyd, of the 2nd Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, does a security check on the first female voter at one of the polling stations in Ramadi, Iraq. Security concerns in the city were expected to keep voter turnout low.

Baghdad: A historic election

BAGHDAD, FROM PAGE 6

Interrupting game after game, soldiers from the battalion's three companies and others from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment visited polling sites throughout the day to check on security.

They didn't spend much time at any, said 1st Lt. Daniel Hurd, Company A, 2nd Battalion's executive officer. Site security was entirely handled by Iraqi soldiers and police.

At one point a patrol from Company A passed a handful of armored personnel carriers from an Iraqi mechanized unit on one of the main north-south streets through the Kadhimiya district. Pedestrians waved and cheered as the Iraqi troops passed.

"I've seen more (Iraqi National Guard) in the past three days than I have in the entire time in country," Wood said.

Not only was Iraqi security seen in large numbers throughout the district, but so were voters.

"Based on the reports received during the day ... I'd say there was a 75 percent turnout," said battalion commander 1st Lt. Col. John Spitzer, as he stopped at a forward patrol base shortly before the end of the elections.

By 11 a.m. reports had reached the battalion command post at Camp Justice that some polling sites were running out of ballots.

Throughout the small section of Baghdad, people walked around with blackened right index fingers, the identifying mark of those who have voted.

Soldiers took pictures and videos of Iraqis dancing and singing outside of the polling sites after they cast their votes.

Soldiers seemed less enthusias-

BY JOSEPH GIORDONO

Stars and Stripes

RAMADI, Iraq — Security concerns, roadside bombs and a series of brief gunbattles kept most Ramadi citizens from participating in Sunday's historic Iraqi elections.

One U.S. soldier was killed and at least two others injured by a roadside bomb around 3 a.m. Sunday, according to military officials. In another attack at noon, a Humvee patrolling less than 200 meters from a polling station was hit by another bomb, sending a huge plume of smoke into the sky.

The Humvee crew all escaped with minor wounds, but the explosion touched off long bursts of machine-gun fire from Iraqi and American troops manning security positions at the nearby polling site, a large grammar school compound.

According to soldiers who were observing from a nearby rooftop position, the second roadside bomb was planted by a teenage boy who ran into the street and dropped a large plastic bag just moments before a U.S. patrol drove through.

For long minutes after the explosion, ammunition from the Humvee continued to cook off and fire into the air.

Before the explosion, 75 people — including Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq poll workers and special police command-

dos protecting the site — had voted at the school in eastern Ramadi, U.S. military officials said. At midmorning, the nearby streets had been full of curious residents watching voters walk to the polling station. After the explosion and gunfire, the streets were deserted and no other voters came.

Ramadi's 400,000 residents were subject of a harassment campaign by insurgents, who promised death to anyone who voted Sunday.

At another polling site in the Sofiya district of Ramadi, the polls were more active. More than 100 people had voted by early afternoon, officials said. There were eight polling stations in the city of Ramadi, U.S. and Iraqi officials said, and they estimated that about 1,000 people cast ballots during the day.

"I'll never forget this day," said Pfc. Brandon Bell, a 19-year-old infantryman from Napa, Calif., who had been manning the polling entrance closest to the second Humvee explosion.

Bell and another soldier with Company C, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment felt small pieces of shrapnel land on their position after the explosion.

The first Iraqis to vote in Ramadi were the security forces and election workers, who began casting their ballots just after the polls opened at 7 a.m. The first

two civilian voters came in at 8 a.m., and they were followed shortly after by a group that included two women.

In a tent near the polling station entrance, three female soldiers from the 2nd Forward Support Battalion — which deployed from South Korea along with 4,200 other U.S. troops last fall — helped perform security checks on the female voters who arrived.

Iraqis who voted through interpreters they were proud to have participated in a day they thought would never happen. The first two women who voted — arriving in long black robes and headscarves — repeatedly said thanks to Allah and shook nearly every hand in sight.

When one of the women placed her ballot in the large plastic collection bin, she turned her eyes and palms skyward, uttering a short prayer.

Soldiers and Marines in Iraq certainly knew they were part of something historic, despite the low turnout in Ramadi.

"I had grandfathers who fought in Korea and World War II, and I don't think they really knew they were doing something special at the time," said Marine Lance Cpl. Christopher Green, a dog handler attached to the 1-503rd for election day.

"But I think guys know this is big. This is something important."

E-mail Joseph Giordono at: giordono@starsandstripes.com



JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Dustin White, medic with 1st Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, stands next to his Humvee on Election Day on Sunday. Posters for the many Iraqi political parties running in the election are pasted on the nearby bridge support.

Pentagon Car Sales salutes the men and women of the US Armed Forces serving in Iraq. Our thoughts and prayers are with you for a speedy and safe return to home and family. May God bless you and the United States of America

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Around the world expatriate Iraqis vote

BY MICHAEL McDONOUGH
The Associated Press

LONDON — Iraqis around the world streamed into polling stations Sunday for their last chance to cast ballots in Iraq's historic election, expressing hopes that the vote will bring peace and stability to their homeland.

As millions of people in Iraq defied insurgent threats and voted in their nation's first independent election in five decades, Sunday also marked the third and final day of absentee voting in 14 other countries.

"This is a clear and loud message that Iraqis inside and outside are united in defeating terrorism," Mansour Ibrahim said as he entered a voting center amid tight security in the upscale Sufliya neighborhood in the Jordanian capital, Amman.

Scuffles broke out between voters and anti-U.S. protesters at a polling station Sunday in Britain and voting was extended at one site in Australia to make up for lost time after a similar skirmish the day before.

But no major violence was reported and organizers said the three-day balloting that started Friday has been a success so far, despite early concerns about turnout after only 25 percent of 1.2 eligible Iraqis abroad registered to vote.

The low registration figure was attributed partly to fears of violence and retribution from insurgents but also the fact that not all countries with large numbers of Iraqis, including Egypt, participated and many voters had to travel abroad to register and then again to vote.

Many Iraqis in the United States had to



Iraqi national Shukria Abdul Kadir, who lives in London, holds up her passport as she registers before voting for the Iraq elections Friday. This is the first time the 83-year-old woman has participated in an Iraqi election.

drive hundreds of miles to reach the five polling places: Nashville, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington.

Most of those who did sign up were thrilled at the chance to participate. The latest available figures showed that about two-thirds of those who did sign up had cast ballots in the first two days.

The Geneva-based International Organization for Migration, which is conducting the expatriate vote for Iraq's electoral commission, said 186,619 of the 280,303 registered Iraqis went to the polls Friday and Saturday, many traveling long distances.

"Everything is proceeding well, every-

one is terribly excited about these historic elections," said Sarah Fradgley, an IOM spokeswoman in London. "Everyone is anxiously waiting for news from Iraq and people have been speaking to their families in Baghdad and elsewhere."

Fistfights broke out at a polling station in Manchester, northern England, between mostly Kurdish-Iraqi voters and dozens of protesters who claimed the elections legitimize the U.S.-led coalition's presence in Iraq. Sky News TV reported.

Jubilant voters at a voting center in Wembley, northwest London, danced and held up Kurdish flags.

But police said they arrested one person for threatening behavior and about 50 demonstrators protesting the elections waved banners and shouted slogans in Arabic.

In Berlin hundreds of Iraqi expatriates arrived by the busload to take part in the voting.

"It is the first time we've been allowed to vote. For us, for our lives, it is very important," said Rana Al-Mudhaffar, 52, who left Iraq in 1980. She and her 24-year-old daughter, Sana, traveled three hours from the eastern state of Thuringia to cast ballots.

"We're hoping a democratic government will bring peace and stability to Iraq."

In Australia, voting was extended by a half hour on Saturday and Sunday at a polling station after skirmishes pitting largely Shiite Iraqi voters against protesters identified as fundamentalists and a bomb scare closed it for an hour on Saturday.

Countries hosting the vote were Australia, the United States, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Iran, Jordan, the Netherlands, Sweden, Syria, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

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AN ARMY OF ONE

Iran has a stake in Iraqi election results

BY NASSER KARIMI
The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran strongly criticized the U.S. invasion of Iraq that toppled Saddam Hussein and opposed the U.S. occupation of its neighbor over the past two years. But with Iraqis voting Sunday for a new government, Iran stands to reap huge benefits. The election is likely to propel Iraq's majority Shiites into power

Leaders in Tehran see new opportunities for relations

for the first time since modern Iraq came into being in 1921, giving them the leading voice in shaping the country's future, which Shiite-dominated Iran hopes will lead to friendly relations between the two nations that fought a brutal war two decades ago.

"This is a unique opportunity, not seen for centuries, for Iraqi policy to go in Iran's favor," said political analyst Hamid Reza Jalalpour.

Some Sunni Arab countries worry a new Iraqi government will form a Shiite cabal with Iran, but Iranians say they would be

happy with a secular Iraqi government that will simply establish good relations with them. Most importantly, some said, Iraqis need to decide what they want.

"Let its people decide about their country's future," said Houshang Darab, 50, an Iranian textile broker who appealed to both the United States and Iran to avoid interfering in Iraq. "A secular, democratic government is the best choice since it would not have any excuse for war."

Iranians took the Iraqi elections in stride, with the historic event not being closely followed or discussed in Tehran. Television coverage was limited to a few minutes of footage in regular newscasts. Newspapers published editorials on the elections, and some of them printed a supplement on the history of Iraq, the election process and political system.

"I hope the election leads to the exit of the occupiers from Iraq," Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani said, according to the official Islamic Republic News Agency.

State-run Tehran television said in a commentary Sunday the election "would be the beginning of democracy and the end of occupation and insurgency in Iraq."

Though both countries are home to most of the world's holiest Shiite shrines and their people have deep-rooted religious ties, an Iraqi Shiite theocracy could create problems for Iran, if it began to vie with Iran for leadership of worldwide Shiite Islam.

"A nonmilitary, non-ideological and elected government secures Iran's interests," said political analyst Saeed Laylaz.

The two countries have a bitter history. Iraq, controlled by Saddam's Sunni Arab dictatorship, fought an eight-year war with Iran that killed and injured an estimated 1 million people before it ended in 1988. The two neighbors have never signed a peace agreement.

More recently, interim Iraqi Defense Minister Huzem Shalan called Iran his country's "first enemy," accusing it of supporting Iraqi insurgents and allowing them to freely cross the border. Tehran says it is trying to control the border, but at nearly 1,000 miles long, the frontier is hard to police.

The United States has also accused Iran of interfering in Iraq's affairs, a charge Tehran has denied.

The election has put Iranian hard-liners, who dominate political life here, in an awkward position. Support for the poll would put them on the side of their arch-enemy the United States, while calling for a boycott would deny Iraq's Shiites a historic opportunity for power.

Iranian leaders, nervous about the presence of U.S. forces next door, also hope the election will be the first step toward ending the U.S. presence in Iraq.

Many Iranians, scarred by the memories of war, looked to the elections as a guarantee there would be no repeat of the conflict.

"We would witness peaceful co-existence with Iraq if democracy materializes there," said Mohammad Kianoushah, a former member of the national security and foreign policy committee in Iran's parliament.

Shahriar Heidari, governor of Qasr-e Shirin, a border city that was flattened by Iraqi forces during the war, hoped the vote would bring peace.

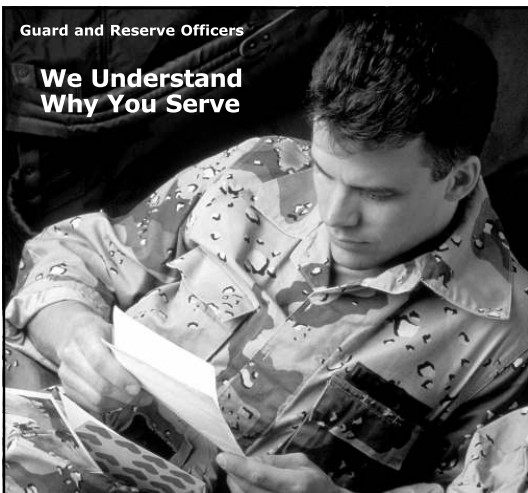
"We will be happy if Iraqis are happy. Their security is our security. Democracy in the country would work in favor of the border areas of Iran," he said.

He said the city's population of 30,000 would quadruple if peace and security were established in Iraq. About 130,000 people lived there before the Iran-Iraq war.

Others were more pessimistic. "Sooner or later, Iran and Iraq will fight another war, this time using the excuse of presence of U.S.-led forces there," said Rajab Mansouri, a university student. "The Iran-Iraq border will never be at peace."

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U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Saturday, at least 1,428 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,087 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The AP count includes four military civilians and is 17 higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Friday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major

combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,290 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 978 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military and the State Department:

■ A Defense Department civilian and a Navy sailor were killed Saturday when a rocket hit the U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad.

■ A U.S. soldier was killed Saturday by an explosive in western Baghdad.

■ Two U.S. soldiers died Friday when their helicopter crashed in southwestern Baghdad.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ No identifications reported.

IN THE WORLD

5 weeks after tsunami, death toll still rising

BY IRWAN FIRDAUS
The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — More bodies were still being discovered in Aceh five weeks after the disaster and the government said it had buried nearly 5,000 more victims in the past week, upping the death toll across 11 countries to between 150,704 and 178,115. Additionally, the number of missing ranges from 26,404 to 142,132 — with most presumed dead.

The variation in the tolls reflects differing figures being released by separate government agencies in both Sri Lanka and Indonesia, the hardest-hit countries in the Dec. 26 disaster.

Meanwhile, fresh fighting in Indonesia's Aceh province and a premature end to cease-fire talks between the government and rebels dampened hopes of peace in the tsunami-hit island, but aid workers said Sunday they weren't being targeted and were optimistic the massive relief effort would not be disrupted.



An Acehese woman washes dishes outside her tent in a refugee camp in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, on Sunday. Aceh's government said it buried nearly 5,000 more victims in the past week, upping the death toll across 11 countries to between 150,704 and 178,115.

The clash in Aceh occurred Saturday when soldiers shot and killed a guerrilla commander and three of his fighters in a gunbattle in the east of the province, Indonesian military spokesman Lt. Col. Eddyana Sulistiadie said. Inde-

pendent confirmation was not immediately available.

But the United Nations said it didn't expect the fighting to affect relief work.

"We don't expect to be a target," said Joel Boutroux, head of

the United Nations' relief efforts in Aceh.

Meanwhile, in other developments:

■ French construction giant Lafarge SA, the world's largest cement supplier, said it plans to invest "tens of millions of dollars" to rebuild a big cement factory in Aceh that was damaged by the tsunami. "There is a lot of money coming in for the reconstruction, and naturally cement will be needed for that," Tom Ehrhart, the head of Lafarge Indonesia, said.

■ Austria announced it would send a team of experts to Sri Lanka to help rebuild its rail system, which was badly damaged by the waves. Among the dead in Sri Lanka were about 800 people who were killed when the tsunami tore through their train as it traveled along the coastline.

■ Thailand is to establish a tsunami museum to chronicle the plight of survivors and changes to the environment in areas devastated by the waves. Photographs, video footage, satellite images and interviews with survivors

have already been collected, the Thai News Agency said.

■ A meeting in Thailand of delegates from 47 nations approved a plan Saturday to set up a tsunami warning network for southern Asia. Delegates had originally planned for a centralized system, but failed to agree on where to base a hub that would collect seismic and oceanographic data, analyze it and issue alerts to coastal areas in danger. Experts say even a few minutes' warning could have saved many of the lives lost.

The Aceh peace talks were held near Helsinki, Finland, on Friday and Saturday. They ended a day early without a formal truce. Indonesian Minister Sofyan Djalil described the talks as "quite hopeful." Ahtisaari said neither party had yet accepted an invitation to a second round of meetings.

There was no word on why they ended prematurely. Indonesian Communications Minister Sofyan Djalil described the talks as "quite hopeful." Ahtisaari said neither party had yet accepted an invitation to a second round of meetings.

West Bank turmover

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israel will transfer security control over several West Bank towns to the Palestinians Wednesday, Israel's defense minister said Sunday, hours after meeting with a top Palestinian negotiator to work out the details of Israel's troop redeployment.

Israel informed Palestinian officials it was ready to withdraw from all West Bank towns "within a very short period of time" and return to positions it held before the outbreak of fighting in September 2000, said Hassan Abu Libdeh, a senior Palestinian official.

5 killed by old mine

ARGHANDAB, Afghanistan — Five civilians died and at least nine others were injured Sunday when their pickup truck hit a mine apparently left over from Afghanistan's long wars, officials and witnesses said.

The vehicle detonated the land mine after driving off the side of the road in a remote area near Arghandab province.

Three die in shootout

KUWAIT CITY — Three suspected terrorists and a security officer were killed Sunday in a shootout in a neighborhood in Kuwait's capital where many foreigners live, state television reported Sunday.

Four police officers were injured in the clash and one suspect was arrested in the operation, according to state-owned Kuwaiti Television. A Bahraini who lived in the building where the attack took place was also killed, according to the report, but he "was not connected to the incident."

From The Associated Press

Suspected terror bomb hits Spanish hotel

BY DANIEL WOOLLS
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — A bomb exploded Sunday in a Mediterranean resort hotel in southern Spain after a telephone warning from the Basque separatist group ETA, injuring one person, the Interior Ministry said.

The bomb was contained in a backpack and detonated in a courtyard of the Hotel Port Denia at about 3:15 p.m. Denia is a beach town in the Spanish province of Alicante and is popular with tourists.

The warning call was placed to police in the Basque region. The caller ended the warning by saying, "Gora ETA," which is Basque for "Long live ETA," an Interior Ministry official in Madrid said on condition of anonymity.

The hotel immediately evacuated about 160 people before the bomb exploded about 30 minutes later. A male guest suffered slight ear injuries from the blast, the official said.

Interior Minister Jose Antonio Alonso condemned the attack in a statement and vowed that Spain's security forces "will continue to use all the means at their disposal, with current law as the only limit, until ETA disappears completely."

ETA is blamed for more than 800 deaths since the late 1960s in a campaign of bombings and shootings aimed at achieving an independent Basque homeland in land straddling northern Spain and southwest France.

The hotel bombing occurred two days before Spain's Parliament was scheduled to debate — and almost certainly reject — a proposal making the Basque re-

gion virtually independent.

On Jan. 18, a powerful car bomb exploded in the affluent town of Getxo near the main Basque city, Bilbao. That blast also was preceded by a call from a person claiming to speak for

ETA.

That explosion caused slight injuries to a policeman and dashed hopes that ETA might be close to calling a cease-fire. Two days earlier, ETA issued a statement appealing to the Spanish govern-

ment to start peace talks with Batasuna, ETA's banned political wing.

The statement made no mention of ETA laying down its weapons, the government's stated condition for undertaking such talks.

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Social forum ends on upbeat note

Activists see promise for gains in battle against poverty

By PAUL HAVEN
The Associated Press

DAVOS, Switzerland — More than 2,000 of the world's rich and powerful left this luxurious Swiss ski resort Sunday with a message of hope about the future of the Korean and a few more ideas on how to improve the world.

South Korean unification minister Chung Dong-young said he was hopeful there would be "substantial resolution" in nuclear talks with North Korea. "The time for diplomacy is now," he said.

Whether any of the lofty goals set forward at the World Economic Forum for stamping out poverty, fighting disease and bringing peace to the Middle East and elsewhere will take root in the global trouble spots far from this idyllic Alpine village won't be known for some time.

But there was hope among many social activists here, including U2 frontman Bono, that the world leaders were doing more than just blowing smoke.

"I think we can be the generation that ends extreme poverty. I really do, and I think I will spend the rest of my life pledged to that commitment," Bono said, heaping praise on British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates and others he said were committed to "getting it right" in fighting poverty, particularly in Africa.

The Davos summit has been taking place for decades, mostly as a place for billionaires and millionaires to mingle. Businessmen pay \$12,000 each for the privilege of rubbing

shoulders with each other and political heavyweights like German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, former U.S. president Bill Clinton, newly elected Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and others.

But the gathering has become more socially conscious in recent years, in part in response to anti-globalization protesters who have denounced it as elitist and disconnected.

Blair and French President Jacques Chirac challenged world leaders to finally address grinding poverty in Africa, where 300 million people lack safe drinking water, 3,000 African children under the age of 5 die every day from malaria, and 6,000 die daily of AIDS.

"We know all of this. So what can be done?" Blair said in the forum's keynote address.

Britain wants rich nations to set a timetable for raising development aid and for more countries to join the "International Finance Facility" that is designed to double aid to Africa from \$50 billion a year.

American leaders, normally a strong presence at the summit, were notably absent this year amid a rise in anti-U.S. sentiment. The highest-ranking Bush administration official to attend was Labor Secretary Elaine Chao. The absence of a Republican heavy-hitter at the meeting, which comes only a week after President Bush's inauguration, frustrated some participants trying to get new insight into U.S. policy over the next four years.

Talks at the summit echoed the mood around the world.

There was optimism over Israeli-Palestinian

relations amid steps toward reconciliation by both sides since the death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Shimon Peres, Israel's vice premier, said the "magic has returned to the mountain" of Middle East peace after many years of violence and hopelessness. In 1994, Peres negotiated with Arafat in round-the-clock talks that both sides hailed as inspired by the mountain, a reference to Thomas Mann's novel "The Magic Mountain," which is set in Davos.

Far less optimism was expressed over Iraq — a senior analyst at Rand Corp. described the situation as a "clarion call" for Islamic militants that may spark terrorist attacks far from its borders.

"In terms of perception, we've already lost the war," said Bruce Hoffman, chief of the think tank's Washington office. "I believe that a cult of the insurgent has emerged from Iraq."

Other Mideast issues were given a positive spin, with a senior Saudi ambassador predicting that women in the strictly segregated Islamic nation will be allowed to vote in future elections, and the Iranian foreign minister suggesting that informal contacts with the United States over nuclear issues were achievable through European intermediaries.

On the economic front, Chinese Vice Premier Huang Ju predicted that the nation's per capita income will triple over the next 15 years, and that there was no reason for the world to fear his country's emergence as a global giant. "China will by no means pose a threat to others," he said. "The earth is a common home to all of us."



Nigerian president and current AU Chairman Olusegun Obasanjo and his wife, Stella Obasanjo, arrive Sunday at the venue of the African Union Summit in Abuja, Nigeria.

Summit aims to cut woes in Africa

By DANIEL BALINT-KURTI
The Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria — Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo implored dozens of leaders gathered Sunday at an African Union summit to work together to overcome the problems afflicting the world's poorest continent.

Africa's conflicts — and ways the AU can help end them — are expected to take center stage during the summit, with leaders set to discuss fighting in war-torn countries such as Ivory Coast and Congo, and ongoing violence in Sudan's western Darfur region, officials said.

"Let us show to the world that we can really tackle and solve African issues," said Obasanjo, who holds the AU's rotating leadership, as he kicked off the summit in the Nigerian capital, Abuja.

While most of the world has grown wealthier in the four decades since the majority of African countries won independence, the continent has largely grown poorer, a fact the chairman of the Ethiopia-based AU, Alpha Oumar Konare, linked to persistent conflicts.

"If the security of our continent doesn't improve, no development is possible," he told African leaders.

At least 40 of Africa's 53 leaders were in Abuja for the twice-yearly, two-day summit.

U.N. reform is also high on the summit's agenda. African leaders are vying for more of a say in U.N. affairs, long dominated by the U.N. Security Council's five permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

One possible U.N. reform is expanding the Security Council, and Nigeria — the continent's most populous nation and a regional power — is one of the African country's angling for a permanent seat on a larger council.

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Sweden's oldest twins give credit to turnips

The Associated Press

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — They have lived for 200 years between them, but Sweden's oldest pair of twins had never seen anything like this before.

Holding up a birthday cake and two bouquets of flowers, Siri Ingvarsson and Gunhild Gaellstedt seemed bewildered by the number of photographers huddled around them in the living room of Gaellstedt's Stockholm apartment earlier this week.

"Why do they need five photographers?" Gaellstedt asked. "Do they not think we'll stick on the film?"

The media attention seemed

hard to understand for the sisters — after all, Ingvarsson said, the fact that they turned 100 on Sunday "isn't that big of a deal."

"Not much different from turning 99," she said.

Still, Ingvarsson and Gaellstedt — who both walk without any assistance and do all their daily chores themselves — said their best to answer some of the questions they've almost grown tired of by now. No, they repeated time and again, they do not really have a secret formula for long life.

"We like to joke and say it's because we lived only on turnip bark in 1914," Gaellstedt said. "That's all we had to eat during the world war. The first one, that is."

They have a more normal diet now, they said, but that hasn't stopped them from keeping their health. Aside from when they gave birth — they each had one child — Gaellstedt is the only one who has ever been hospitalized. She broke her thigh bone two years ago, but recovered quickly, she said.

But in a country where senior citizens have access to free home-help service, the sisters do their shopping, cleaning, cooking and laundry themselves. They have both lived in the same apartment building for more than 50 years, Ingvarsson on the second floor and Gaellstedt on the third. The building has no elevator, but neither sister has any trouble getting up and down the stairs every day.

IN THE STATES

Criticism: Nearly \$9B unaccounted for in Iraq

BY LARRY MARGASAK
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. occupation authority in Iraq was unable to keep track of nearly \$9 billion it transferred to government ministries, which lacked financial controls, security, communications and adequate staff, an inspector general has found.

The U.S. officials relied on Iraqi audit agencies to account for the funds, but those offices were not even functioning when the funds were transferred between October 2003 and June 2004, according to an audit by a special U.S. inspector general.

The findings were released Sunday by Stuart Bowen Jr., special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction. Bowen issued several reports on the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the U.S. occupation government that ruled Iraq from June 2003 to June 2004.

The official who led the CPA, Lt. Paul Bremer III, submitted a blistering, written reply to the findings, saying the report had "many misconceptions and inaccuracies" and lacked professional judgment.

Bremer complained the report "assumes that western-style budgeting and account-

"We believe the CPA management of Iraq's national budget process and oversight of Iraqi funds was burdened by severe inefficiencies and poor management."

Stuart Bowen Jr.

Special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction

ing procedures could be immediately and fully implemented in the midst of a war."

The inspector general said the occupying agency disbursed \$8.8 billion to Iraqi ministries "without assurance the monies were properly accounted for."

U.S. officials, the report said, "did not establish or implement sufficient managerial, financial and contractual controls." There was no way to verify that the money was used for its intended purposes of financing humanitarian needs, economic reconstruction, repair of facilities, disarmament and civil administration.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said Sunday the authority was hamstrung by "extraordinary conditions" under which it worked throughout its mission.

"We simply disagree with the audit's con-

clusion that the CPA provided less than adequate controls," Whitman said.

Turning over the money "was in keeping with the CPA's responsibility to transfer these funds and administrative responsibilities to the Iraqi ministries as an essential part of restoring Iraqi governance."

The inspector general cited an International Monetary Fund assessment in October 2003 on the poor state of Iraqi government offices. The assessment found ministries suffered from staff shortages, poor security, disruptions in communications, damage and looting of government buildings, and lack of financial policies.

Some of the transferred funds may have paid "ghost" employees, the inspector general found.

CPA staff learned that 8,206 guards

were on the payroll at one ministry, but only 602 could be accounted for, the report said. At another ministry, U.S. officials found 1,417 guards on the payroll but could only confirm 642.

When staff members of the U.S. occupation government recommended that payrolls be verified before salary payments, CPA financial officials "stated the CPA would rather overpay salaries than risk not paying employees and inciting violence," the inspector general said.

Bremer attacked many of the specific findings. Among his rebuttals points:

■ The report was suggesting the CPA "should have placed hundreds of CPA auditors" in Iraqi ministries, contrary to United States and United Nations policy of giving Iraqi ministers responsibility for their budgets.

■ The CPA established a program review board, an independent judiciary and inspector generals in each agency to fight corruption.

The inspector general's report rejected Bremer's criticism. It concluded that despite the war, "We believe the CPA management of Iraq's national budget process and oversight of Iraqi funds was burdened by severe inefficiencies and poor management."

Woman dies in prison

LAS VEGAS — The only woman on Nevada's death row, imprisoned for running down a holiday crowd on a sidewalk nearly 25 years ago, died Saturday at age 75, authorities said.

Priscilla Ford, who had appealed her death sentence several times, was suffering from emphysema, said Fritz Schlottman, spokesman for the Nevada Department of Corrections.

Ford was convicted of killing six people and injured 23 others when she drove down a crowded Reno sidewalk on Thanksgiving Day in 1980.

Selling KKK gear

HOWELL, Mich. — Ku Klux Klan robes sold for up to \$1,425 and a KKK knife drew a \$400 bid Saturday during an auction of paraphernalia from the racist group that critics have blasted as insensitive.

Auctioneer Gary Gray said a steady stream of people visited the auction house in Howell in the hours leading up to the sale, where participants could bid on 12 KKK robes and capes, as well as buttons, brooches, scarves, patches and movies.

Four killed in crash

GENESEO, N.Y. — A charter bus collided with a tractor-trailer in western New York on Saturday, splitting the bus in half and killing four people.

The bus was carrying members of a Canadian women's hockey team when it rear-ended the truck parked on the shoulder of Interstate 390, about 27 miles south of Rochester.

The truck driver and three passengers were killed, said Mark O'Donnell, a spokesman for New York State Police.

From The Associated Press

Storm puts lights out for 300,000 in Georgia

Latest winter debacle again leaves hundreds stranded in airports

BY ELLIOTT C. MCGLAULIN
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — More than 300,000 customers had no electricity Sunday in Georgia as crews worked to repair power lines snapped by an ice storm, and hundreds of people stranded by canceled airline flights spent the night sleeping at the city's airport.

Two traffic deaths in Georgia and one in South Carolina were blamed on the storm that spread sleet and freezing rain across parts of the Southeast on Saturday.

The weather was taking a sharp turn on Sunday, with highs in the 40s forecast for northern Georgia and in the 60s in the southern part of the state, the National Weather Service said.

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport got ready to open a third runway Sunday, spokeswoman Lani Thomas said. Only two — and at one point only one — of its four runways were available Saturday as crews labored to scrape off ice.

Still, fewer than 100 departures were scheduled out of one of the world's busiest airports Sunday morning, she said. About 300 travelers spent the night at the airport Saturday night.

"I'm sure the airlines are going to do everything within their power to rebuild their schedules," Thomas said.



A firefighter walks past the destruction left after a motor home collided with an 18-wheeler on Interstate 77 Saturday in Fort Mill, S.C. The Timbers family of Ontario, Canada, was on their way to Walt Disney World when they hit a patch of ice and lost control.

Teen abortions bill high on GOP's priority list

BY DAVID CRARY
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The abortion bill most likely to become federal law this year would affect a relatively small number of pregnant teens, yet its impact on them could be dramatic — sharply reducing the options for girls in many states who dread telling their parents of their plight.

Supporters and opponents each offer vivid worst-case scenarios in debating the bill, which was introduced last week in the Senate Republican's priority list.

It would outlaw transporting a minor across state lines to obtain an abortion, and to evade parental consent or notification laws in the girl's home state.

The bill's advocates evoke the

image of a girl being impregnated by an abusive older man who then drives them to an out-of-state abortion clinic so the girl's parents and the authorities won't find out about a relationship that might have been illegal because of age differences.

Opponents of the bill say it would criminalize the well-meaning acts of an aunt, older sister or other confidante who assists a girl terrified of being beaten or evicted from home if her parents learned of the pregnancy.

"You're talking about girls who really need help — let them use whatever support they have," said Shavawn Towey of the National Network of Abortion Funds. "This bill is going to have a chilling effect on people who are just there to help."

Titled the Child Custody Protection Act, and carrying a sentence of up to one year in prison, the bill has bounced around Congress for years, winning House approval three times but never reaching a vote on the Senate floor. Only now — after making the Senate GOP's Top 10 priority list — do supporters and foes believe its passage is probable.

"We're proceeding as if it's going to pass," said Lorraine Kenny of the American Civil Liberties Union's Reproductive Freedom Project. ACLU lawyers already are studying possible challenges on grounds that the bill violates the right to travel from state to state and does not make an exception for cases when a girl's health is jeopardized.

Activists on both sides expect support for the bill from majority Republicans, perhaps joined by some Democrats. Some doubt Democratic leaders will wage an all-out fight against it.

"Politically, it would be very high risk for the Senate Democrats to filibuster this bill," said Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee.

"Polls show that about 80 percent of Americans support the concept of parental notification."

Opponents agree that young women are better off telling parents about a pregnancy, and say most do so voluntarily. But abortion-rights activists argue that politicians should not impose mandates that might backfire in cases where family communication already has broken down.

OPINION

High self-esteem feels good, yet falls flat

By Roy F. Baumeister

Does low self-esteem lie at the root of all human suffering, failure and evil? When I ran my first research study on self-esteem in 1973, that certainly seemed to be the case. Psychologists everywhere were convinced that if only we could help people to accept and love themselves more, their problems would gradually vanish and their lives would flourish. They would even treat each other better.

Not surprisingly, California led the way, establishing a task force for exploring ways to boost healthy self-esteem to solve personal and social problems. The task force members — like many of us — were undeterred by the weakness and ambiguity of the evidence suggesting a benefit in boosting self-esteem; we all believed the data would come along in good time.

Then-Assemblyman John Vasconcellos (and many other experts) predicted that self-esteem could solve, or at least help solve, such problems as crime, teen pregnancy, pollution, school failure and underachievement, drug abuse and domestic violence. (Vasconcellos even expressed the hope that higher self-esteem would one day help balance the state budget — a prospect predicated on the observation that people with high self-regard earn more than others and therefore pay more in taxes.) A generation — and many millions of dollars — later, it turns out we may have been mistaken. Five years ago, the American Psychological Society commissioned me and several other experts to wade with an open mind through the enormous amount of published research on the subject and to assess the benefits of high self-esteem.

Here are some of our disappointing findings. High self-esteem in schoolchildren tends to produce better grades. (Actually, kids with high self-esteem do have slightly

better grades in most studies, but that's because getting good grades leads to high self-esteem, not the other way around.) According to a study by Donald Forsyth at Virginia Commonwealth University, college students with mediocre grades who received regular self-esteem strokes from their professors ended up doing worse on final exams than students who were told to suck it up and try harder.

Self-esteem doesn't make adults perform better at their jobs either. Sure, people with high self-esteem rate their own performance better — even declaring themselves smarter and more attractive than their low-self-esteem peers — but neither objective tests nor impartial raters can detect any difference in the quality of work.

Likewise, people with high self-esteem think they make better impressions, have stronger friendships and have better romantic lives than other people, but the evidence doesn't support their self-flattering views. If anything, people who love themselves too much sometimes annoy other people by their defensive or know-it-all attitudes.

Self-esteem doesn't predict who will make a good leader, and some work (including that of psychologist Robert Hogan writing in the *Harvard Business Review*) has found humility rather than self-esteem to be a key trait of successful leaders.

It was widely believed that low self-esteem could be a cause of violence, but, in reality, violent individuals, groups and nations think very little of themselves. They turn violent toward others who fail to give them the inflated respect they think they deserve. Nor does high self-esteem deter people from becoming bullies, according to most of the studies that have been done; it is simply untrue that beneath the surface of every obnoxious bully is an unhappy, self-hating child in need of sympathy and praise.

High self-esteem doesn't prevent youngsters from cheating or stealing or experi-

NBODY HAS A NOSE LIKE YOU IN ALL THE WORLD. THAT MAKES YOU A VERY UNIQUE AND SPECIAL PERSON. YOU ARE PROUD OF THAT!



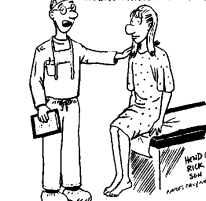
SELF-ESTEEM BUILDING IN THE PAST

menting with drugs and sex. (If anything, kids with high self-esteem may be more willing to try these things at a young age.)

There were a few areas where higher self-esteem seemed to bring some benefits. For instance, people with high self-esteem are generally happier and less depressed than others, though we can't quite prove that high self-esteem prevents depression or causes happiness. Young women with high self-esteem seem less susceptible to eating disorders. In some studies (though not all), people with high self-esteem bounce back from misfortune and trauma faster than others.

High self-esteem also promotes initiative. People who have it are more likely to speak up in a group, persist in the face of failure, resist other people's advice or pressure and strike up conversations with strangers. Of course, initiative can cut both ways: One study on bullying found that self-esteem was

NO! DON'T! WHAT A NUISANCE. DON'T WORRY, WE'LL MAKE YOU A SWAN WITH A LOT OF SURGEY AND WHILE WE'RE AT IT, A LITTLE BREAST AUGMENTATION CAN'T HURT.



MODERN DAY SELF-ESTEEM BUILDING

high among the bullies and among the people who intervened to resist them. Low self-esteem marked the victims of bullying.

In short, despite the enthusiastic embrace of self-esteem, we found that it conferred only two benefits: It feels good and it supports initiative. Those are nice, but they are far less than we had once hoped for, and it is very questionable whether they justify the effort and expense that schools, parents and therapists have put into raising self-esteem.

After all these years, I'm sorry to say, my recommendation is this: Forget about self-esteem and concentrate more on self-control and self-discipline.

Recent work suggests this would be good for the individual and good for society — and might even be able to fill some of those promises that self-esteem once made but could not keep.

Roy F. Baumeister, a professor in the department of psychology at Florida State University, is the author of "The Cultural Animal." This column first appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*.

Religious right pitching a fit inside GOP's big tent

By Elmer Smith

Philadelphia Daily News

For years, Christian conservatives have backed the GOP for a kiss and a promise. They usually end up with a kiss-off. But that screeching noise from the GOP's big tent this year is the sound the religious right makes when it tires of turning the other cheek.

In a warning as clear as the Ten Commandments, some of President Bush's most ardent supporters have told him to move the anti-gay-marriage amendment closer to the top of his agenda or they will withdraw their support for his Social Security reform.

Leading the charge is the Arlington Group, a newly formed coalition of religious leaders who backed the president in part because he claimed he'd fight for the ban. But Bush didn't even mention it in his inaugural address, nor was it listed in a 10-point legislative agenda Republican congressional leaders unveiled last week.

The Rev. James Dobson of Focus on the Family, one of the leaders of the Arlington Group, took one look at the GOP agenda and ordered an immediate revision.

"If Republicans," Dobson said in an interview on the Focus on the Family Web site, "do what they've done in the past, which is say 'thanks so much for putting us in power; now we don't want to talk to you anymore,' they will pay a serious price in four or maybe two years."

That's pretty tough talk. Considering the clout they brought to this last presidential election, you'd think they were in a position

to demand what they want.

You'd be wrong. The president hardly lifted a finger to fight for an anti-gay-marriage amendment to the U.S. Constitution in his first four years. He may actually lift a finger this time. But he won't get it done.

Nor will conservatives make much headway in the fight to alter Roe v. Wade. Abortion foes who helped elect them last year are getting the same old lip service they get after each election.

The crowd who showed up on the National Mall in the annual March for Life last Monday got a canned speech from the president's retreat in Camp David. No Republi-

can president in 25 years has showed up for the march.

"The America of our dreams where every child is welcomed in law ...," Bush said, "may still be some ways away."

He pointed out the ban on partial-birth abortions passed last year. But conservatives know that law won't even make a dent in the more-than-a-million legal abortions a year performed since Roe v. Wade.

It's going to take a lot more to appease the Arlington Group.

In a letter to Karl Rove this month they criticized Bush's "defeatist attitude on an issue that is at the top of our agenda." If

Bush is "reluctant to devote the same energy to preserving traditional marriage," the letter said, it would "create outrage with countless voters who stood with him a few weeks ago."

That would be the same kind of outrage black voters and labor leaders have felt when the Democratic Party has abandoned their agendas for a more moderate path. They fire off nasty confidential letters, which they later leak to the press. They threaten mass defections.

But in the end, they are left to choose between the gradualism of their own party and the total disregard of the other party. Welcome to the big tent.

Mallard Fillmore

Mallard's sage
Super Bowl
Prediction #1



Fans will applaud new NFL rules mandating fines and jail time...



...for announcers who beat tired old catchphrases to death...



By Bruce Tinsley

Ooooh... HE TAKES IT TO THE HOUSE...



Twin record set

NY FREDONIA — The 157-student freshman class at Fredonia High School includes seven sets of twins — enough to earn the district a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Guinness has sent the district a certificate, which will be displayed in the high school.

Only three of the sets attending the Chautauqua County school, about 50 miles west of Buffalo, were born locally.

Naughty festival name

MN GILBERT — Promoting this town's proud history is one thing. Naming the town's festival Gilbert Wherehouse Days is another thing entirely.

A group of angry citizens showed up at a City Council meeting to protest the event. The festival's name refers to a time when Gilbert, a remote town of about 2,000 people, was known for its bars, gambling and "working girls" during the U.S. government ban on drinking in the 1920s and 1930s.

"The damage has been done," resident Fran Marolt said. "This is not a family-oriented activity."

The event doesn't include any of the activities that gave the festival its name, but City Council members still don't approve.

Organizers say the festival — and its name — are meant to bring back a part of history. The festival is scheduled for two days in July and includes a car show, antique fair and bank robbery re-enactment.

Black-and-white apology

FL JACKSONVILLE — When five dozen roses didn't work, an estranged husband took out a full-page newspaper ad to ask his wife for forgiveness.

"Please believe the words in my letter, they are true and from my heart," read the ad in The Florida Times-Union. "I can only hope you will give me the chance to prove my unending love for you. Life without you is empty and meaningless."

Larry, who declined to give his last name, sent the \$17,000 apology to Marianne, his wife of 17 years.

"It was a culmination of things," he told the newspaper. "But I am desperately trying to save our marriage."

A relative told him that Marianne saw the advertisement.

"She said my wife read the ad and started crying. But so far I've had no response from her," Larry said.

Animal electrocution

TX BROWNSVILLE — A water pump at the Gladys Porter Zoo may have produced an electric current that killed three antelopes, zoo officials said.

According to autopsies, the female West African bushbucks died the weekend of Jan. 8 of acute myocardial necrosis complications of the heart.

"We can't say for sure that this happened, but we have ruled out as many things as possible," zoo spokeswoman Cynthia Garza-Galvan said in The Brownsville Herald.

"The results are consistent with



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

electrical shock."

License investigation

CO DENVER — Officials will examine Colorado's 124,000 commercial driver's licenses following allegations that state workers sold some to unqualified drivers and illegal immigrants, state revenue officials said. The commercial licenses are required to drive tractor-trailers and other large vehicles. Two driver's license examiners and a third person face charges.

Airport tops own record

NV LAS VEGAS — McCarran International Airport hosted more than 41.4 million travelers last year, besting its previous record of 36.9 million set in 2000. Southwest Airlines was the busiest carrier at McCarran, serving just under 13 million passengers, a 10.8 percent increase from the previous year.

Hog competition

NC LEXINGTON — Punsutawney Phil could get some competition, from a real hog. Officials in Lexington say their Lil Bit will do the forecasting on Feb. 2.

While groundhog Phil will be



More butter, please

Veronica Lopez at the Popcorn Factory in Lake Forest, Ill., fills tins with popcorn. National Popcorn Day is Jan. 31. Americans on average eat about 68 quarts a year.

looking for his shadow in Pennsylvania. Lil Bit, the 65-pound potbellied pig, will be doing the same in Lexington.

Lexington is famous for its pigs, but they're usually smothered in barbecue sauce.

Trail reopened

AZ FLAGSTAFF — A popular trail into the Grand Canyon that was closed because of weather-related rock and land slides has reopened. National Park Service officials are requiring hikers to wear metal spikes on their shoes because of icy conditions. Mule trips on the Bright Angel Trail remain suspended.

Body found after storm

NY NEW YORK — A 70-year-old cab driver who died in his parked taxi just as a blizzard hit the region went undiscovered for three days as snow piled up over his vehicle.

The man, whose name was not released pending family notification, was found in the Gravesend section of Brooklyn, near where he lived, said Sgt. Kevin Ferrell, a police spokesman.

It appeared that he died of a heart attack shortly after parking his car on the street, the same day a winter storm began dumping nearly 18 inches of snow on the city.

Snowplows pushed banks of snow against his car, blocking the view inside. The man's body was discovered only after above-freezing temperatures melted the snow.

Video games banned

MO JEFFERSON CITY — Gov. Matt Blunt banned video games from the state's prisons, a month after a newspaper reported some of Missouri's most violent inmates were allowed to play games simulating murders, carjackings and the killings of police officers.

Blunt, a Republican who took office two weeks ago, called video games "a luxury that inmates should not be allowed to enjoy."

The ban applies to all video games — violent or not.

The Corrections Department already had removed 35 violent video games from the maximum-security Jefferson City Correctional Center as The Kansas City Star prepared to publish a story about the games in early December.

Secession considered

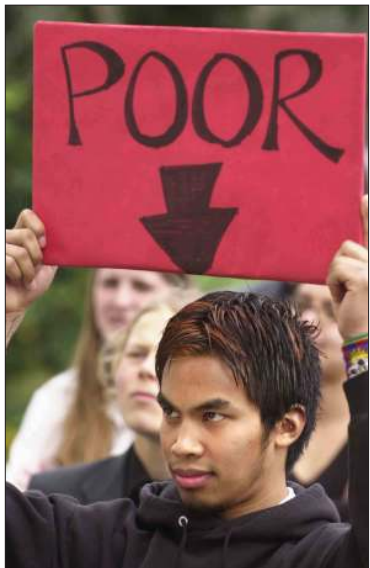
VT WINNHALL — Officials in another community want their town to secede from Vermont and join New Hampshire.

The Winhall Selectboard plans to ask voters about the secession idea on Town Meeting Day on March 1.

Town officials believe property taxes in Vermont are too high and the education funding system is flawed. A successful secession vote would send a message to the Legislature, said Selectboard Chairman Frank Pinto.

"It's to make a statement to Montpelier," he said. "We're not happy."

Killington voters approved a proposal last year to merge with New Hampshire after repeated attempts to challenge the state's edu-



Tuition protest

Bud Khuth, Associated Student Government president at Mt. Hood Community College, joins members of the Oregon Student Association to rally for lower tuition rates in Salem, Ore.



Arctic art

Leoncio Medina Rodriguez of Mexico City interrupts a piece titled "Nautilus" at the Budweiser International Snow Sculpture Championships in Breckenridge, Colo.



Jeff Brock unloads a tire for the truck Big Sergeant before a monster truck competition at the Oil Palace in Tyler, Texas.

Tall tires in Tyler



Bubbly youngster

Helen Ball Elementary School kindergarten Saul Sarinana blows soap bubbles as part of the El Paso, Texas, school's Science Expo.



Cooler heads prevail

Robby Woodworth, 10, left, reacts as Kane Rose, 11, dumps snow onto his head after leaving school for the day in Hutchinson, Kan.



Original approach

With the help of 3-foot-tall letters made from hundreds of carnations and the Korbel Perfect Proposal Contest, Kristin Dunn of Boise, Idaho, turned the tables on tradition by popping the question to her unsuspecting boyfriend, Tim Szofran. He said yes.

Danger on drawbridge

FL HALLANDALE BEACH — A 79-year-old woman suffered only bruises after a drawbridge opened beneath her as she walked across it, leaving her dangling from the structure.

Helen Koton said she did not hear any warning signals before the bridge began to open with her nearly halfway across. She said she was able to grab the railing.

As the bridge rose to its full height, motorists got out of their cars and told the bridge attendant, who lowered the span after several minutes.

"Finally, I came down. When I came down, I fell on my face, so I bruised my forehead and my nose," she told Miami television station WSVN.

Fired for smoking

MI LANSING — Four employees of a health care company have been fired for refusing to take a test to determine whether they smoke cigarettes.

Weyco Inc., a health benefits administrator based in Okemos, Mich., adopted a policy Jan. 1 that allows employees to be fired if they smoke, even if the smoking happens after business hours or at home.

Company founder Howard Weyers has said the anti-smoking rule was designed to shield the firm from high health-care costs. "I don't want to pay for the results of smoking," he said.

The rule led one employee to quit before the policy was adopted. Four others were fired when they balked at the smoking test.

Chief Financial Officer Gary Climes estimated that 18 to 20 of the company's 200 employees were smokers when the policy was announced in 2003. Of those, as many as 14 quit smoking before the policy went into effect. The company offered them help to kick the habit.

Young, white, rich, drunk

NY NEW YORK — Young, white Manhattan residents with household incomes at or above \$50,000 are more likely than average to be excessive drinkers, while nearly half of city residents never drink at all, according to a study by the city health department.

Some 23 percent of adults age 18 to 24 and 20 percent of those 25 to 44 report drinking to excess — defined as more than two drinks a day for men and more than one a day for women, the study said.

By comparison, only 11 percent of those 45 to 64 and 6 percent of those 65 or older say they drink excessively.

In Manhattan, 22 percent of residents describe themselves as excessive drinkers — the highest percentage among New York's five boroughs and twice the rate recorded in the Bronx, where 11 percent report drinking heavily.

Messages mixed

WA OLYMPIA — The secretary of state's message is being lost in translation.

Washington state residents say the office's Web-based translation software is creating some odd turns of phrase when it takes the English version of information and puts it into Chinese or Korean.

For example, a statement about Secretary of State Sam Reed proposing "statewide mandates to restore public trust" became "Swampy weed suggests whole state order recover open trust" in Chinese and "A plant weed proposes national mandate to recover public property trust" in Korean.

A Chinese translation option was removed from the Web site on Jan. 12 and Korean got the heave-ho later without word on whether or when they would be restored.

"It's not a perfect system, but the best it can," said Matthew Edwards, the agency's webmaster. "We pulled it because of the complaints. If it's totally confusing, it's worthless."

Alleged activist gunplay

TX WACO — A longtime Republican Party activist has been indicted on charges of shooting at workers cutting down trees at her Woodway home.

Carolyn Payne Lomax, 63, was indicted on two counts of aggravated assault in a 2004 incident when Asplundh Co. workers were trimming trees around utility lines for utility company Oncor.

Lomax has said no one from the company contacted her before workers "butchered" her trees.

Lomax said the workers appeared to be mocking her in Spanish. After repeated pleas, she said, she went inside and grabbed a .22-caliber pistol.

"I went back out in the yard and I said, 'I have a gun. Get off of my property. You're trespassing,'" Lomax said. "They laughed, and they continued to cut."

Lomax said she fired two or three shots and called police to report the trespassing.

No one was injured.

Prostitution arrests

NY NEW YORK — A prostitution ring that netted roughly \$30 million over the last decade and operated out of five midtown Manhattan apartments was busted with the arrest of 25 people believed to be involved, police said.

Those arrested included several female prostitutes, as well as a number of men charged with an assortment of crimes, said Sgt. Kevin Hayes.

The escort service was called Julie's of New York City, Hayes said.

Elderly woman Tasered

SC ROCK HILL — A police officer used a stun gun on a 75-year-old woman who became distraught when she could not locate a sick friend at a nursing home, according to an internal report.

Officer Hattie Jean Macon received a verbal warning and was required to attend a Taser retraining course after the investigation found she acted prematurely when she used the 50,000-volt Taser, according to the report.

Macon was called to the nursing home after Margaret Kimbrell refused to leave. Kimbrell has said she was distraught after the staff would not disclose the location of her sick friend, and she became concerned the friend had died.

Kimbrell was charged with trespassing and resisting arrest. Her lawyer said she may sue the department.

Stories and photos from wire services

AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first Scoreboard page in the sports section or AFN's Web site at <http://mvaafn.dodmedia.osd.mil>

MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006

(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOM)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 Stanley "Shirley" Leary	Movie *** "The David Cassidy Story" (2000) Andrew Kavovit, Malcolm McDowell	Dr. Phil	Jeopardy!	The Sellyers Story	RPGA Golf 800 Hours Chrysler Classic - Final Round. From La Quinta, Calif. (Taped)	30-Minute Movie	Jeopardy!
9:30 Sawto-Siamess Cat		(K-6) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	News Watch		Paula's Home Cooking	Headline News
10:00 Arthur (E)		(K-6) Gauding Light	ESPNews	Bulls and Bears		Designer's Challenge	ESPNNews
10:30 Reading Rainbow (E)	Movies ***** "Seven Years" (1986), Suzanne Cialini	(K-7) General Hospital	Advisory Block	Carrots on Business		Fragrance Emergency	AFN Evening News
11:00 Stanley	Morgan Freeman *** (17) directed his victims vs. his son in Deadly Sin	Headline News	30 Minutes	Forbes		Life Is Great! Bruce Burke	AFN Evening News
11:30 Dora the Explorer		Judge Judy	Without a Trace 'Coming home'			The King of Queens	
12:00 The Wiggles "Imagination"	Movie *** "Sister Act" (1999)	Bob Hoody: Maroon & Debra Messing	24 'Day 3: 11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon'	Oatline NBC	SportsCenter	That 'Nite Show (Part 1 of 2)	Without a Trace 'Coming Home'
13:00 Bob Hoody: Maroon & Debra Messing	Whoopi Goldberg: A Rino jumps silver spots as a nun and elude mob assassins.		Pacific Report	Fox and Friends		Charm'd "Check Line"	24 'Day 3: 11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon'
13:30 Dragon Tales (E)		The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	Pacific Report		College Baseball! Georgia tech at Maryland. (Taped)	Ally McBeal "Is All Around (Part 1 of 2)"	Pacific Report
14:00 Blue's Clues		Mucha Lucha	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	American Morning		Any Day Now "Chapter One"	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno
14:30 Barney & Friends Local	2-55 Movie ***** "Gold Ponda" (1981), Danna Kathanne Hepburn, Henry Fox Jr. Jane Fonda	Access Hollywood	Access Hollywood	College Baseball! Virginia Tech at Duke. (Taped)		Third Watch "Spring Forward Fall Back"	Access Hollywood
15:00 Full House		Jeopardy!	Jeopardy!	College Baseball! Virginia Tech at Duke. (Taped)		Headline News	Headline News
16:00 Pokemon		Headline News	The Late Late Show	FOX News		The Law & Order "Trade This"	The Late Late Show
16:30 Vi-Gi-Oh! Tristan disappears.		ESPNews	Headline News	Dennis Miller		The Simpsons	
17:00 The Wild Thornberrys		AFN Evening News	Headline News	Headline NBC	College GameNight	Everybody Loves Raymond	Dennis Miller
18:00 The Fairly OddParents		30 Minutes	Headline News	Courtline With Keith Olderman		The Law & Order "A makeup mogul is embroiled in scandal."	Courtline With Keith Olderman
18:30 Ruggals "New Kid In Town"	Movie ***** "Enough" (2002) Suzanne McCormick	Without a Trace 'Coming home'	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	FOX News	Boxing Arthur Galis vs. James Jaxa (Taped)	Headline News	Headline News
19:00 "Jane" "Sad Review"	A woman takes her daughter and goes for abusive husband.	Headline News	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	FOX News		The Law & Order "A makeup mogul is embroiled in scandal."	Headline News
20:00 Smallville "Vortex"		Headline News	Good Morning America	Your World With Neil Cavuto		Friends	Good Morning America
21:00 Boy Meets World	2-37 Movie *** "Picture Perfect" (1997), Jennifer Aniston single gal pretends to be engaged to her former classmate	Headline News	Good Morning America	Your World With Neil Cavuto		Sainted "The Singer Story"	Good Morning America
21:30 The Cosby Show		Headline News	Good Morning America	Your World With Neil Cavuto		Sainted "Cigar Story Indiana Stand Alone"	Good Morning America
22:30 Home Improvement		The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	Good Morning America	Your World With Neil Cavuto		Sainted "Cigar Story Indiana Stand Alone"	Good Morning America
23:00 Touched by an Angel "Jagged"	Movie ***** "Of Mice and Men" (1992) John Malkovich, Robert Downey Jr.	Headline News	Good Morning America	Your World With Neil Cavuto		Sainted "Cigar Story Indiana Stand Alone"	Good Morning America

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2000

00:00	Aashli Real Monsters	(11:00) Movie *** "Of Mice and Men" (1992, Danna)	Let's Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
00:00	Rock! Power	Movie *** (1992, Danna)	Access Hollywood	Beer in the Big Blue House	NBC Nightly News		Ben in the Big Blue House	Beer in the Big Blue House
1:00	The Family OddParents	(1:35) Movie *** "Say Any Number" (1989) Jim Carrey	A woman's college basketball coach at Tennessee, Livie	Connie the Cow	ABC World News Tonight	College Basketball Missouri at Kansas, (Live)	The Dead Zone Johnny is harassed by a disc jockey	Connie the Cow
1:30	Rugrats	(1:55) Movie *** "Lizzie McGuire" (1993) Gelfand	high school graduate years for a movie validation.	Wheat of Fortune	CBS Evening News		Use a O'Leary's makeup model is embroiled in scandal	Wheat of Fortune
2:00	Taina "Bad Review"			Dr. Phil	The Newseum/Tom Lehrer		American in Haiti	Dr. Phil
2:30	Smallville "Vortex"	Movie *** "Enough" (2002, Supersas) Jennifer Lopez, A woman takes her daughter and her abusive husband.	College Basketball Providence at Pittsburgh, (Live)	Opal Winfrey	Rannity & Colmes	Winter X-Games From Aspen, Colo.	Entertainment Tonight	Opal Winfrey
3:00	Boy Meets World			NBC Nightly News	Headline News		NBC Nightly News	NBC Nightly News
3:30	Boy Meets World			Judge Judy	Nightly Business Report		Seinfeld "The Dinner Party"	Judge Judy
5:00	Sesame Street (E)	(5:37) Movie *** "Picture Perfect" (1997) Jennifer Aniston, Single gal pretends to be engaged to further her career.	Headline News	Access Hollywood	Lois Lobb Tonight		Breathin' Easy	Access Hollywood
5:30	Barney & Friends (E)			(2:25) Guiding Light	College Basketball		Caribbean Workout	(2:25) Guiding Light
6:00	Barney & Friends (E)			Headline News	(1:13) General Hospital	Larry King Live	College Basketball Utah at BYU, (Taped)	Barney & Friends
6:30	Dragon Tales (E)			Headline News		Nightly With Aaron Brown	The View	The View
7:30	Bob the Builder			Play With Me Sesame	Jerry King Live		The View	The View
7:30	The Wiggles	Entertainment Tonight		Beer in the Big Blue House			Emmi Live	Emmi Live
8:00	Dora the Explorer			Connie the Cow	All Grown Up "River Rats"	BET Nightly News	All Grown Up "River Rats"	All Grown Up "River Rats"
8:30	Dora the Explorer			Wheat of Fortune	Teen Kids News (E)	Tavis Smiley	Teen Kids News (E)	Teen Kids News (E)
9:00	Sagwa-Siamess Cat	(9:00) Movie *** "Flowers for Algernon" (2000, Danna)	Dr. Phil	Headline News	Nightly News	Arana Football Teams to Be Announced, (Taped)	30-Minute Meals	Headline News
10:00	Arthur (E)	(10:40) Movie *** "Gorillas in the Mist" (1988) Sigourney Weaver, Based on the life of anthropologist Dian Fossey.	(8:46) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	Headline News	Handball With Chris Matthews	Best for Less	Headline News
10:30	Reading Rainbow			(2:25) Guiding Light	Advisory Board	Smallville "Truth"	Striped	Pacific Report
11:00	Sagwa-Siamess Cat			Headline News	Smallville "Truth"	The O'Reilly Factor	Striped	Pacific Report
11:30	Dora the Explorer			(11:40) Movie *** "Gorillas in the Mist" (1988) Sigourney Weaver, Based on the life of anthropologist Dian Fossey.	(11:40) General Hospital	Headline News	That '70s Show "Part 2 of 2"	Headline News
12:00	Dora the Explorer			Headline News	Wor Stories	FOX News	Headline News	Wor Stories
12:30	The Wiggles			Judge Judy	Wor Stories	FOX News	Headline News	Wor Stories
13:00	Bob the Builder			(12:40) Movie *** "Gorillas in the Mist" (1988) Sigourney Weaver, Based on the life of anthropologist Dian Fossey.	(12:40) Movie *** "Gorillas in the Mist" (1988) Sigourney Weaver, Based on the life of anthropologist Dian Fossey.	NBA Basketball Teams to Be Announced, (Taped)	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	The Simpsons
13:30	Dragon Tales (E)			Headline News	The Simpsons		Charmmed "Ex Libris"	The Simpsons
14:00	Barney & Friends (E)			Headline News	Pacific Report	Fox and Friends	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Pacific Report
14:30	Barney & Friends (E)			Headline News	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	American Morning	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno
15:00	Funtastic Home Movies	(2:52) Movie *** "Jaws 2" (1978, Home) Ray Scott, Another massive shark attacks off the coast of Amity.	Headline News	Let's Show With David Letterman	Headline News	CNN Live Today	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
15:30	Fall House "I'm Not D.J."			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
16:00	Yo-Gi-Ho!			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
16:30	Doug (E)			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
17:00	The Entertainers			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
17:30	The Wild Thornberrys			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
18:00	The Family OddParents			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
18:30	A Rugrats Passtover			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
19:00	The Proud Family			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
19:30	Amelia			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
20:00	Everwood "Fear Islet"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
20:30	Sister, Sister "Christmas"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
21:00	Sister, Sister			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
21:30	The Cooby Show			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
22:00	Home Improvement			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
22:30	Touchback by an Angel "into the Fire"			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News
23:00	Movie *** "The Three Stooges" (2000) Evan Hand			Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Charmmed "Ex Libris"	Headline News

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- tax-free car sales
- grab a great deal!



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Wiesbaden Office: Near Mainz-Kastel US Storage Station Boelckestrasse 38 55252 Mainz-Kastel
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FACES

Palmer weds at 75, feels youthful again

At 75, Arnold Palmer feels like a kid again after saying, "I do."



Palmer

Palmer married Kathleen Gawthorp Wednesday in an intimate beachside ceremony on Oahu, Hawaii's North Shore. "I feel like a 25-year-old," he said Thursday.

The ceremony took place in a beach cottage near the Arnold Palmer Course at the Turtle Bay Resort, where the four-time Masters champion was to play at this weekend's Champions Tour event.

"She's a great lady. I've known her for a long time. We've been engaged for some time and dated before that," Palmer said. "She's just very special."

The wedding ceremony, held as the sun set over the Pacific Ocean, was private and small. "The minister, the bride and the groom. That was it," Palmer said.

This is Palmer's second marriage. His wife of 45 years, Winnie, died in 1999.

Berlin film festival presenters named

German actress Franka Potente, Chinese actress Bai Ling and French fashion designer Nino Cerutti will be among those choosing the winner of the Golden Bear top prize at the Berlin International Film Festival next month.

The names were announced Thursday by organizers of the event, which will be held Feb. 10-20. Roland Emmerich, director of "Independence Day" and "The Day After Tomorrow," will head the jury.

Among the 12 contenders for the top prize are Wes Anderson's "The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou," Kinsey," about American sex researcher Alfred Kinsey, and "Paradise Now," a Dutch-German-French co-production that follows 28 hours in the lives of two Palestinian suicide bombers.

Foot infection nearly knocked out Swank

While training for the boxing drama "Million Dollar Baby," Hilary Swank was nearly TKO'd — by a foot infection.

Swank, nominated for an Oscar as best actress for her performance in the Clint Eastwood-directed film, says a blister on her foot nearly led to her downfall.



Swank

After popping the blister, Swank continued her rigorous workouts. But soon she was in intense pain and knew something was wrong. "I couldn't believe the pain," the 30-year-old actress said.

"It was unbelievable, and I looked down, there were streaks going to my foot."

"So, I went to the doctor's that second and he looked at me and he said, 'This is really serious. And if you would have waited two more hours, you would have been in the hospital for three weeks — and if it gets to your heart, that's it.'"

Swank says she was diagnosed with a bacterial infection but never told Eastwood, also her co-star in the movie, because it wouldn't have been in character. Instead, she took several days of medication rest and then returned to the set.

"I didn't tell Clint," she says. "The producers don't know ... because in the end, that's what happens to boxers: They get blisters, they get infected. They have injuries, and they keep pushing through it."

Swank won an Oscar in 2000 for her performance in "Boys Don't Cry."

Tsunami-relief benefit raises \$50,000

A benefit concert by country, gospel and contemporary Christian artists to help victims of the tsunami in South Asia raised more than \$50,000.

Christian pop star Michael W. Smith and country singer Kathy Mattea hosted Wednesday's event — "An Evening for Restoration: Music City Comes Together for Tsunami Relief" — at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

Performers included Steven Curtis Chapman, Marty Roe of Diamond Rio, CeCe Winans, Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder, Steve Cropper, the Oak Ridge Boys, Kirk Waldum, TobyMac, Crystal Gayle, MercyMe, Lee Greenwood, The Whites, Raul Malo, The Crabb Family, Dr. Bobby Jones, Michael Martin Murphey, the Nashville Chamber Orchestra and several Grand Ole Opry stars.

Proceeds went to the international relief agency World Vision, which is working in the stricken southern Asian region, concert organizers said Thursday.

Islamic architect designer honored

Prince Karim Aga Khan IV received the fifth Vincent Scully Prize in recognition of his decades of work to re-energize design in the Islamic world and to preserve historic sites.



Aga Khan

The Vincent Scully Prize, named for an architect professor at Yale University, was established in 1999 to recognize exemplary practice scholarship or criticism in architecture, historic preservation and urban design.

World Bank President James Wolfensohn was among those in the audience Tuesday night paying tribute to the Aga Khan at a black-tie gala.

The Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam, a spiritual leader of 20 million Ismaili Muslims in Asia and Africa, who traces his lineage directly from the Prophet Muhammad. The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has educated a generation of architects, teachers, planners and researchers, most of them Islamic

world, since 1979.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



Paul Mesner holds a puppet in his studio in Kansas City. Mo. Mesner, 48, produces puppet shows in Kansas City and across the country. He also is new president of Puppeteers of America, an organization that promotes puppetry in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

PUPPET LOVE

Demand for puppeteers surges as interest grows

BY MARIA SDEUKUM FISHER

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Paul Mesner romps around his studio in shorts and tennis shoes, pointing out the special mouth hinges and weighted eyeballs that go into making the perfect puppet. His specialty is traditional rod puppets, but he also works with hand puppets and marionettes.

Mesner is founder of Paul Mesner Puppets and is the new president of Puppeteers of America, an organization that promotes puppetry in the United States, Mexico and Canada. He is taking the helm of the 2,000 or so member organization at a time when puppets rule.

It's not just Bert and Ernie or Miss Piggy and Kermit anymore.

Puppets have become major players on Broadway, starting in such productions as "Avenue Q," "The Lion King" and "Little Shop of Horrors," and are featured in such movies as "Team America: World Police."

College students also have taken note. The University of Hawaii and West Virginia University offer courses in puppetry, and students at the University of Connecticut-Storrs can get bachelor's and master's degrees in puppet theater.

"The whole puppetry thing is incredibly vital right now," Mesner says. "And I can think of four or five universities that are turning out five to six graduate students a year and 10 to 20 undergraduates a year. Then there's Disney, which is training about 500 people to be puppeteers at their theme parks."

John Bell, who teaches a puppetry workshop at Emerson College in Boston and has been a POA member since the 1980s, said Mesner would be good at bridging the gap between the older puppeteers and the younger ones.

"He's part of that generation that came up after Jim Henson and among the people who saw the possibilities with puppets and were part of this real flourishing of puppet theater in combination with the avant-garde and the political art, and with the new possibilities of television and film," Bell said.

Bell, who also runs Great Small Works, a puppet theater in New York, said it's an important time for puppetry because people no longer only associate it with children's theater.

Now, when people find out you work with puppets, they don't say, "Do you know the Muppets?" They say, "Oh, there's some avant-garde

puppet show in a water tank in New York." It's just part of the consciousness of people now."

While puppetry has been on the move lately, it has been a constant in Mesner's life. Now 48, he made his first puppet as a child by adding strings to the back of his teddy bear. He went on to apprentice with a puppeteer in Nebraska during junior high and high school. And he learned early that puppetry would not be an easy career choice.

"You have to be tenacious to make it in the theater," Mesner says.

"You get no respect and no glory in puppetry. ... But what matters the most is when kids come up and tell me they loved my show."

Mesner produces puppet shows throughout the United States. His past productions include a two-hour opera collaboration of "The Mikado," "Strega Nona" and "Cinderella," in which the heroine heads off to the ball on a Vespa. Shows are often sold out but some of his more ambitious productions, such as last spring's opera collaboration of "The Mikado," didn't draw as many people as Mesner had hoped.

"We generally count on 2,000 people seeing a show. But every time I'm setting the bar a little higher," Mesner said. "We got 4,000 to 'The Mikado,' but we wanted 5,000."

Robert Trussell, theater critic for The Kansas City Star, credits Mesner with adding to the local theater scene.

"For Kansas City, it's unusual because most children's theater has a tendency to be extremely earnest," Trussell said. "They shy away from anything that could conceivably be misinterpreted. But Paul never worried about that. ... He always had this quirky sense of humor that made his shows entertaining."

Mesner says he never speaks down to children. "So much of what kids get to watch has either been dumbed down or grossed down," he says. "I don't do that. I try to write everything for all ages."

As new president of POA, Mesner plans to reach out to people interested in moving into puppetry as a career. "Puppeteers of America needs to make itself a little more relevant, especially to the young people entering the field," he says.

He would tell students entering puppetry to consider starting their own company. Kansas City, which has about 1.5 million residents in the metro area, supports at least four puppet theaters, he says.

"I would tell young puppeteers to make a five to 10-year commitment to a city," Mesner says. "It's just an underserved market, and think of all those unemployed actors in those cities."



KEY: Sunny Partly Cloudy Mostly Cloudy Cloudy Showers Tornadoes Rain Rain/snow Snow Cold front Warm front Trough Occluded Low High

AFRICA

Capetown	78	63	Mogadishu	91	73
Dakar	86	64	Nairobi	75	57
Freeport	89	71	Rabat	69	47
Kinshasa	89	72	Tripoli	66	40

THE WORLD

Amsterdam	47	39	Manila	87	72
Bahran	71	53	Mexico City	74	45
Beijing	33	16	Montreal	23	01
Bombay	86	64	Riyadh	23	01
Buenos Aires	61	59	Rio de Jan	86	74
Buenos Aires	61	59	Sao Paulo	86	74
Calcutta	87	69	Sofia	26	11
Chengdu	64	56	Sydney	80	67
Hong Kong	54	38	Tokyo	49	34

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

Alaska	50	34	OK	34	19
Alaska	50	34	OK	34	19
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EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Cloudy with rain showers. Highs in the mid to upper 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 30s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower to mid 50s. Tuesday lows in the 40s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Cloudy with rain showers. Highs in the lower 20s. Tuesday lows in the upper teens.

France: Partly to mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the upper 40s to lower 50s. Tuesday lows in the upper 30s.

Northern Germany: Cloudy with rain and snow showers. Highs in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Tuesday lows in the lower 30s.

Southern Germany: Cloudy with rain and snow showers. Highs in the 30s. Tuesday lows in the mid 20s to lower 30s.

Hungary: Cloudy with snow showers. Highs in the lower 30s. Tuesday lows in the mid 20s.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 40s. Tuesday lows in the 20s.

Southern Italy: Partly to mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the lower 40s to lower 50s. Tuesday lows in the lower to mid 30s.

Kosovo: Mostly cloudy with morning snow showers. Highs in the lower 20s. Tuesday lows in the upper teens.

Norway: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to mid 30s.

Poland: Partly cloudy. Highs in the 50s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to upper 30s.

Portugal, Spain: Partly cloudy. Highs in the 50s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to upper 30s.

Turkey: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the upper 50s to lower 60s in the south, upper 30s to lower 40s in the north. Tuesday lows in the upper 40s to lower 50s in the north, 30s in the north.

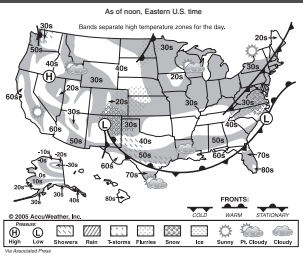
For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to the USAF Operational Weather Squadron home page at: <http://www.sembach.af.mil> <http://www.public.sembach.af.mil>

SUN & MOON

	7:00am	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:00am	7:59AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:01AM	7:58AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:24PM	5:35PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	5:19PM	5:20PM

Last of 2 Feb 05 New Moon 12 Feb 05 First of 3 Feb 05 Full Moon 4 Feb 05

THE UNITED STATES TODAY



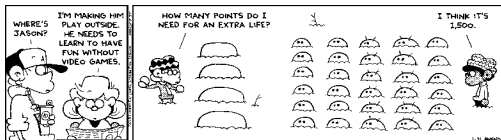
Scheduled to

ETS or PCS?

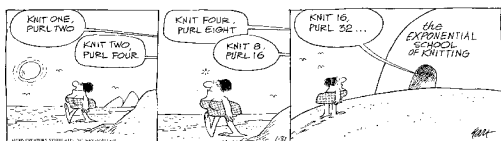
Check our Relocation Guide every Saturday to find Realtors at your new station.

STARS & STRIPES Your Homework Newspaper

Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



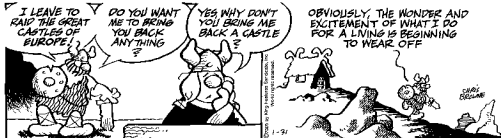
Blondie



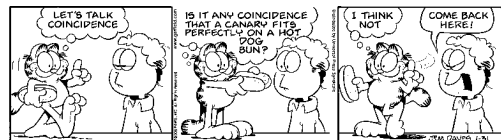
Dilbert



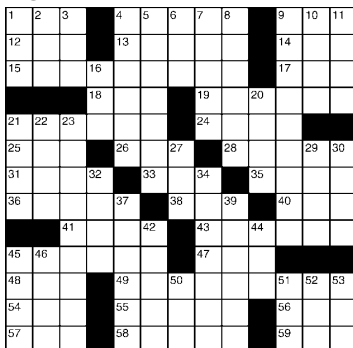
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 "Judging —"
4 Sample recordings
9 Commandment possessive
12 Bill's partner
13 Glorify
14 "Norma —"
15 Movie studio employee
17 — Arbor, Mich.
18 Internet address
19 Garden insects
21 Biker's protection
24 Any second now
25 Oklahoma city
26 "A mouse!"
28 Believers in
31 Orange coat
33 Happy companion?
35 Patina
36 Bordeaux wine
38 Cushion
40 Comic DeLuise
41 Resorts
43 Octogenarian's next milestone
45 Pick
47 Past
48 Swiss canton
49 Baseball, slangily
54 Conclusion
55 Sends forth
56 Demure
57 Buck's mate

Down

- 58 Nasser's successor
59 Lamb's dam
22 Falco of "The Sopranos"
23 Overwhelming victory
27 One of Sennett's squad
29 Coin aperture
30 TV award
32 Nitwit
34 Card game
37 Hiding places
39 Condensed version
42 Leaf pore
44 Japanese theater
45 Sought damages
46 Cube-maker
50 Discumber
51 Apply frosting
52 DuPont rival
53 Viewerfinder

Answer to Previous Puzzle



1-31 CRYPTOQUIP

GJS IRYCGORIKZ QTIKFO
NQE QLGYZIL Q KIH
ECGTQK: "HI YJZ YIGYCI
PK ZNIPS YCQFIE!"

Saturday's Cryptquip: WHEN TROUBLED YOUTHS REIMBURSE MONEY OWED, I SUPPOSE THOSE ARE DELINQUENT PAYMENTS.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: Y equals P

No gifts necessary from Iraq tour

Dear Abby: My son, "Adam," came home from Iraq for a two-week visit. He brought with him some T-shirts for his father, his sister and me. They were last-minute purchases.

Now my mother is furious that she didn't get a souvenir from Iraq.

Our extended family is huge, and Adam didn't have room to bring something for everyone. No one else in the family is upset about it. They're just glad he came home healthy and safe.

My mother complained to her sister, "Irene," and Aunt Irene sent Adam a card in Iraq ordering him to send my mother something. It upset him because he barely knows Aunt Irene.

When I defended my son, Mother said: "I am the grandmother. I should have gotten something." I told her no one expected anything from him.

Is she being unreasonable or am I? Adam is furious that this

nonsense is going on while he's risking his life in Baghdad. I will forward your response to him.

— **Proud Mom in Ohio**

Dear Proud Mom: Please tell Adam that he is in my thoughts and prayers for his safe return from a dangerous tour of duty — which his grandmother apparently has confused with a sightseeing tour. Your son doesn't owe anyone a gift.

His gift to the family will be his safe return.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: I married my husband, "Greg," a year ago. He's a wonderful man from a wonderful family. His parents are upper-middle class and have always had money. Greg and I are just starting out, so we don't have a lot. His mother,

"Ruth," has been generous and thoughtful enough to buy us many of the things we needed to establish our home.

Recently she has started buying me things from very expen-

sive places. Ruth has terrific taste and I love everything she gets me. I always say thank you, and sometimes send her notes. Greg tells me she keeps buying me things because she sees that I use everything she gives me.

I want to do something nice for Ruth that will really be special, but our funds are very limited. No one has ever been so nice to me, much less bought me things, and I want her to know how touched and grateful I am. Any suggestions on how to show my appreciation?

— **Blessed in North Carolina**
Dear Blessed: Just one. Take out pen and paper and write your mother-in-law a letter telling her how blessed you feel to have someone so loving and generous as she in your life. A love letter is one of those gifts that keep on giving to the recipient. I guarantee, it's something she will keep for a lifetime.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can e-mail to Abby at the internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WOGAL

DEGAL

MOANAZ

KOYDEN

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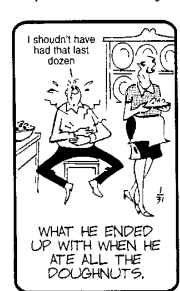
A: A

A: A

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A: A

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrillon



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's

Jumbles: CYCLE LARVA KINDLY BANGLE

Answer: After an hour-long battle with the marlin, the fisherman was — "REELING"

Blood not true test of paternity

Dear Annie: My blood type is AB, and my wife's is B. I happened to see our adult son's Red Cross donor card, and it shows that he is type O. The good news is that we are all regular donors. The bad news is that he cannot be my son.

A little over 40 years ago, around the time "Wayne" was conceived, my wife and I had a bit of a rough patch, but that is long behind us now. I always have considered him my son.

I don't know how to raise this issue with my wife. I love her more than life itself and do not want to harm our close relationship. And, I also don't want to hurt "my" son. At the same time, this knowledge is very troubling to me and may have inheritance implications, etc.

Is there a way to clear the air and let my wife know I will love her no matter what?

Dear Negative: The information on a donor card is not sacro-

Annie's Mailbox



sanct, and it's possible there was an error. If you feel the need to discuss this with your wife, you might want to do so without accusations. If you truly mean what you say, we suggest telling her you saw Wayne's donor card and you decided that it didn't matter.

We hope that goes for the "inheritance implications" as well.

Since you consider him your son, that is how he should be treated, regardless of his paternity. If he is not yours, your wife might want to consider telling Wayne the truth at some point, in case he needs medical information.

Dear Annie: I'm a 23-year-old, newly engaged female. My fiancé proposed in October, and I quickly chose my dress, attendants, reception hall, etc. The problem? My cousin, "Brian," and his wife, "Ashley," are mad because I didn't choose Ashley to be in the wedding party

and I didn't ask Brian's daughter to be a flower girl.

They are so furious they won't speak to me. I had asked Brian's sister if her daughter would be a flower girl, and Ashley tried to get my other cousin to pull her daughter out of the wedding because it would "serve me right."

I've been told to cut them off the guest list, but it saddens me to think some of my own family won't show up. What should I do?

— **New Bride-To-Be**

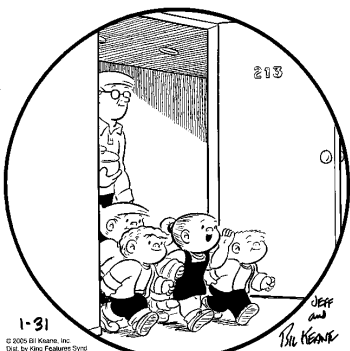
Dear Bride-To-Be: Asking the daughter of one cousin to be a flower girl, but not the other, can understandably cause ruffled feathers. Nonetheless, Brian and Ashley have no business making demands regarding your attendants, and they should be ignored.

If Brian and Ashley don't attend, fine. If they do show up, be as gracious as possible and say nothing more about it.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



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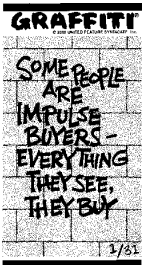
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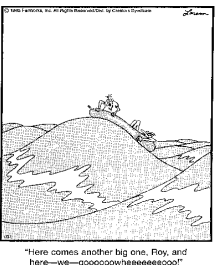
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Domis the Menace



© Gary Larson The Far Side



Non Sequitur



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MONDAY	DUE NOON THURSDAY	FRIDAY	DUE 4 PM TUESDAY
TUESDAY	DUE 4 PM THURSDAY	SATURDAY	DUE NOON WEDNESDAY
WEDNESDAY	DUE 4 PM FRIDAY	SUNDAY	DUE 4 PM WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY	DUE 4 PM MONDAY		

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... it's a SNAP!

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State:

Country:

Category:

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Advertisements)

Merchant Rating System (MRS)

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Autos for Sale - Germany 142

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Motorcycles 164

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Child Care Offered 290

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Without Sosa, Cubs might long for offense

BY NANCY ARMOUR

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs got rid of one problem by finding a taker for unhappy slugger Sammy Sosa.

Now they're faced with another, potentially bigger predicament.

Though Sosa's production has dropped, he was still a key piece of Chicago's offense when he homers 45 times in last season. Throw in departed free agent Moises Alou and the Cubs lose a combined 74 home runs and 186 RBIs.

"You really are not going to replace him," center fielder Corey Patterson said Saturday. "He's one of the superstars of the game. When you're talking about superstars of the game, it's a very, very limited number."

The Cubs are just a few steps away from trading Sosa to the Baltimore Orioles for second baseman Jerry Hairston Jr. and two prospects. The deal isn't done yet, but the teams planned to send it to Commissioner Bud Selig on Monday for approval, necessary because he must sign \$1 million in deals is involved.

Sosa and the Orioles players still have to take physicals, probably Tuesday, and the deal could be finalized as early as Wednesday.

The Cubs have agreed to pay a substantial part of Sosa's \$17 million salary this season. Sosa has agreed to waive provisions in his contract that call for an \$18 million option in 2006 to be guaranteed if he is

traded, and for a 2007 club option to be added at \$19 million with a \$4.5 million buyout. That must be approved by the players' association, which already has said that won't be an obstacle.

Sosa isn't asking for an extension, either, meaning he'd be eligible for free agency after the season unless the Orioles propose a new deal.

"I'm not surprised. I don't think anyone's surprised," outfielder Todd Hollandsworth said. "I think it's going to provide everyone with the fresh start they were hoping for."

Sosa, 36, isn't the feared hitter he was in 1998, when his home run duel with Mark McGwire energized baseball. His average has dropped steadily since 2001, from .328 to .288 to .279 to .253 last season. He's hit 75 homers the past two years — nine more than the 66 he had in 1998 alone.

But there are plenty of players who would gladly take Sosa's numbers. He's hit 30 or more home runs for 10 straight seasons, and he's seventh on the all-time list with 574. He and Alou gave the Cubs four 30-homer players, fearsome production that few other teams came close to matching.

The Cubs do return Ramirez (318, 36 homers and 103 RBIs) and Derek Lee (278, 32, 98), as well as Patterson (24 homers, 72 RBIs and 32 steals). They'll have Nomar Garciaparra for a full season, and get back Todd Hollandsworth, who was hitting a blistering .318 when he went down with an injury that cost him the second half of the season.

But without Sosa and Alou's big bats, the Cubs will likely look like a much different team this season.

"Last year, we didn't create offense, we just smashed the ball," Hollandsworth said. "We were capable of beating Roger Clemens, the best pitcher in the game, any day of the week. We were also capable of losing to the worst team because we relied on the long ball. I think that's what you saw happen the last week of the season. We got cold at the wrong time. We couldn't generate offense."

The Cubs had a monumental collapse down the stretch, losing seven of their last nine to blow a 1½-game lead in the NL wild-card race and cost themselves a spot in the playoffs. Chicago managed just 22 runs in the seven losses.

Now the Cubs will have to concentrate more on manufacturing runs: laying down bunts, stealing bases, moving runners into scoring position.

"We're going to go with pitching, defense and create some offense," Hollandsworth said. "Maybe we're not as good offensively, but we're pretty darn good."

The bright spot is that Chicago's rotation, if healthy, will again be one of the best in the majors. Greg Maddux shows no sign of slowing down, and Carlos Zambrano has emerged as one of the game's best young pitchers, going 16-8 with a 2.75 ERA and 188 strikeouts last year.

Kerry Wood and Mark Prior should be back to their old selves after being hampered by injuries last year, and Glendon



Chicago's Sammy Sosa is close to being traded to the Baltimore Orioles, leaving the Cubs a big offensive void to fill.

Rusch will be given the chance to win the fifth spot after going 6-2 with a 3.47 ERA in spot duty last season.

"We've got great players on our team at each position, a great coaching staff. We definitely have the pitching," Patterson said. "Will it be harder without Sammy? Definitely so. But I think we can still win."

Boston: City revealing in success

BOSTON, FROM BACK PAGE

Crimson quarterback Ryan Fitzgerald went to the postseason Hula Bowl and Shrine all-star games and is getting attention from NFL scouts.

"It's a tough town, we have to keep up with the Joneses," says Harvard head football coach Tim Murphy.

Even the UMass men's basketball team had a moment of glory in December, upsetting defending national champion and Interstate 91 rival Connecticut, then ranked No. 7 in the country.

If only the Celtics, who have struggled since their heyday in the 1980s, could get in on the act.

Boston and its sports teams have always seemed to be in the shadow of New York, despite the 16 basketball titles held by the Celtics, the Bruins' five Stanley Cups, and even the Patriots two Super Bowl wins. Only the Red Sox World Series victory seemed to ease that.

"It's changed the way people think of their city," said Brian Perry, wearing a Red Sox cap. "We've worried that we're not a world-class city, but especially since the Red Sox won, we're not quite as down on ourselves."

But O'Nan says it was the Patriots who revived the city's dreams for the Red Sox.

"The Red Sox are THE team in Boston. There's the Red Sox and there's everything else," former



Confetti drops as Boston Red Sox fans cheer on players during a rally in Boston to celebrate the team's World Series championship in October.

Sox pitcher Pedro Martinez — said this week. "I hope this can help get them (the Patriots) the same respect as the Red Sox because they deserve that."

Tight end Christian Fauria, who played seven seasons with the Seattle Seahawks and is now in his third season with New England, acknowledges the popularity of the Red Sox. But he says life is pretty good in Boston for a Patriot, too.

"This is what I always thought football was going to be like," he said Thursday as the team got back to Super Bowl preparations.

"I thought this is where the fans are into it. There's a lot of good stuff going on, a great sports city, so this is what I expected it to be."

AP sports writers Ronald Blum, Jimmy Vinnicombe and Howard Uman contributed to this report.

Mets catcher Piazza marries ex-Playmate, 'Baywatch' star

The Associated Press

MIAMI — Mets catcher Mike Piazza married former Playboy Playmate and "Baywatch" star Alicia Rickter in a candlelight church ceremony.

With former Mets pitcher Al Leiter and Detroit Tigers catcher Ivan Rodriguez among the baseball stars in attendance,

Piazza and Rickter took their vows at St. Jude's Catholic Church on Saturday before boarding a yacht to a lavish reception at nearby Fisher Island.

The 36-year-old catcher's best man was his brother Tony. Auxiliary Bishop Ignatius Catalano of the Diocese of Brooklyn in New York performed the ceremony that was attended by about 120 people. He said Piazza was "a really like a regular groom, but he's OK."

Rickter, 32, wore a white satin Vera Wang gown and was joined by five bridesmaids, including maid of honor Angelica Bridges, a "Baywatch" co-star, and Playboy Playmates Brande Roderick and Lissa Dergan.

Player implicated in German soccer-fixing scandal

BERLIN — The first soccer player was implicated in Germany's widening game-fixing scandal Sunday, and prosecutors charged three men arrested in the case with fraud.

A referee also was replaced for a first-division game Sunday after his name surfaced during the investigation. The German Soccer Federation called the move "purely precautionary" and said it did not suspect Juergen Jansen of fixing games.

Michael Born, the business manager of third-division SC Paderborn, confirmed to The Associated Press his team had informed the federation that one of its players was involved with the Croatian betting group allegedly behind the fixing.

Club president Wilfried Finke told Sportbild magazine his player was given money for Paderborn's 4-2 German Cup upset of Bundesliga team Hamburger SV in August. He did not identify the player.

The game was one of at least four reported to have been rigged.

The investigation centers on referee Robert Hoyzer, who is accused of accepting bribes as well as the betting group. Hoyzer refereed the Paderborn-Hamburg game, which was decided on two controversial penalty kicks.

After Hoyzer was questioned by authorities, police on Friday raided in four places in Berlin, including a cafe where the referee reportedly met with gamblers and bookmakers. Four men were arrested and three charged.

The scandal came to light when four referees tipped off authorities of possibly suspicious activities by Hoyzer. The Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper reported

last week that Hoyzer admitted receiving money for rigging three games and also implicated players and other referees. He apparently has said no first division games were involved.

Greek sprinters testify at hearing

ATHENS, Greece — Greek sprinters Kostas Kenteris and Thanoú withdrew from a hearing Sunday regarding accusations they intentionally missed a drug test before the Athens Olympics.

Christos Tezoks, the sprinters' former coach, also testified before the sports tribunal for more than 1½ hours during the last day of hearings.

The three presented evidence and denied accusations by track and field's governing body, said Costas Panagopoulos, head of the five-member panel. He estimated a ruling by the end of February.

The sprinters could face a ban of up to two years if found guilty.

Kenteris was the 2000 Olympic gold medalist in the 200 meters.

Thanou won the silver medal in the women's 100.

Kenteris and Thanou withdrew from the games in August after missing doping tests at the Olympic Village on the eve of the opening ceremony. The two spent four days in a hospital, contending they were injured in a motorcycle crash.

The tribunal also is examining accusations that Kenteris and Thanou evaded tests in Israel and Chicago before the Olympics.

After slow start, Safin rolls to title

BY PAUL ALEXANDER

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Marat Safin just needed a little time to get loosened up against Lleyton Hewitt in the Australian Open final.

And once he overcame a terrible start and put his game on track, Safin proved unstoppable, winning in four sets Sunday night and deflating a crowd hanging for an Australian to win this event.

Safin won his second Grand Slam title, his first in five years, with a 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 victory that helped make up for three losses in the Russian's last three appearances on Melbourne Park's hard courts.

"It's really difficult to believe it," Safin said, looking at the winner's trophy. "You need to get to your room, sit down and believe this is yours."

Hewitt was trying to become the first Aussie man to win the Australian Open since Mark Edmondson in 1976, when the event was played on grass at Kooyong.

Looking tight, the fourth-seeded Safin's serve was broken on four backhand errors in his first service game and he won only three points while failing behind 3-0. His biggest weapon, his serve, was erratic and ineffective.

"The first set, you really couldn't call it tennis," Safin said. "I didn't believe I could play that badly."

He talked it up to nerves.

"I tried to come down," he said. "Then in the second set, I more or less got it together."

After the third-seeded Hewitt hit a fore-

hand out on match point, the outgoing Safin was surprisingly subdued, making only one fist pump.

Safin, who got a good luck cell phone text message from the only other Russian to win a men's Grand Slam title — Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the 1996 French Open and 1999 at Melbourne Park — thanked everyone, including the crowd, "even though 90 percent of you were for Hewitt."

Seventh-seeded Serena Williams downed top-ranked Lindsay Davenport in the women's final Saturday and will rise to second in the new rankings.

Safin won the U.S. Open in 2000 and rose soon afterward to No. 1, then plunged as low as 86th after injuries in 2003. He started his comeback here last year, and avenged his loss in that final to Roger Federer by ending the top-ranked Swiss star's 26-match winning streak in the semifinals.

"You knocked off the guy who's nearly been impossible," said Hewitt, who will rise to No. 2 in the rankings, swapping places with Andy Rodick. "I didn't feel like I played that badly out there. You thoroughly deserve it."

Although he usually feeds off controversy — angering three opponents with his on-court shouts and stare-downs on his way to the final — Hewitt unraveled as Safin raised his game. The sellout crowd urged him on, but Hewitt couldn't feed off their energy this time.

"Some of his hitting from the back of the court late in the third set and then the whole fourth set was pretty incredible," said Hewitt, who began preparing months ago to peak for his home Grand Slam.

"I'll be able to walk out with my head

held high that I've given everything," he said. "But right at the moment, I'm human and I'm disappointed. To come that close, train so hard to put yourself in a position, it's hard to take at the moment."

Hewitt was at the top of his game early, zipping from sideline to sideline while committing only one unforced error — to Safin's 13 — in the 23-minute first set and yielding only two points in his four service games. But as Safin got it together, Hewitt started slipping in the second set, yielding an early break and then another at 2-5 to even the match.

With fist pumps and shouts of "Come on! Come on!" Hewitt saved two break points in the first game of the third set as tensions rose and both men's nerves frayed.

Hewitt screamed "No way!" at the umpire in the next game after an overrule on Safin's shot that he thought was long but TV replays showed was on the line.

Safin had his own fist pump and shout of "Vamos!" — Let's go — after one winner, but Hewitt broke serve when he guessed right on Safin's volley and stroked a backhand winner down the line. Safin sent a forehand long on the next point.

Safin, notorious for breaking rackets, spiked another one, but continued to play with it. He got his thighs massaged during the changeover after Hewitt held serve for a 3-0 lead, then complained to umpire Carlos Ramos in Spanish about another close call in the next game.

Hewitt was called for a foot fault on his first serve at 4-2, 30-40. He won the point after a long rally, then was given a code violation for unsportsmanlike conduct for screaming as he pointed at the line judge



Marat Safin reacts to beating Lleyton Hewitt in the Australian Open final.

responsible for the call. Safin got back on serve on his third break point with a backhand winner down the line. Safin complained again to Ramos during the changeover.

Hewitt seemed to unravel. He foot-faulted again at 15-30 in his next service game and double-faulted at 30-40. Handed a 5-4 lead, Safin held serve for the set.

This time, it was Hewitt who sought a massage on the thigh muscles that have given him trouble throughout the tournament.

Safin, suddenly looking confident, rallied from a 40-15 deficit as Hewitt served in the first game of the fourth set, finishing off the break with an overhead winner and a backhand crosscourt pass.

It was the only break Safin needed, as he yielded only three points in his five service games in the set.

Paerson wins super-G; 3 Americans in top 10

BY ERICA BULMAN

The Associated Press

SANTA CATERINA VALFURVA, Italy — Sweden's Anja Paerson won the super giant slalom in the Alpine World Ski Championships on Sunday for her first major international title in a speed race.

Julia Mancuso of the United States finished third in an event in which Americans placed three skiers in the top 10.

Paerson, a technical specialist who added the downhill and super-G to her repertoire only last season, tore down the Deborah Compagnoni course in 1 minute, 17.64 seconds.

"This is unbelievable. I really hadn't counted on it," Paerson said. "Before the race, the most I had speculated was a third place. I was so nervous at the start. I gave everything, risked everything."

"This year, I fought so hard and trained so much, and it's finally paying off. That I am now the world champion is unbelievable."

Lucia Recchia of Italy was second in 1:18.09 and Mancuso finished third in 1:18.40. For the United States, Lindsey Kildow was ninth and Kristen Clark 10th.

"Not perfect but I didn't make any mistakes as big as everyone else's," Mancuso said. "I thought it would be grippier, but it was fast and I made some mistakes from that, going a little straighter than I wanted in some places."

Kildow made several costly mistakes, veering exceptionally wide at one gate midway down.

World Cup super-G leader Renate Goetschl lost a pole at the top of the hill and finished 2.29 seconds off the pace. Two other Austrians, Michaela Dorfmeister and Alexandra Meissnitzer, went off course, missing a gate entirely.

"The steep rock slope, where Michaela and Alexandra went so fast, was difficult, the course comes off course," Paerson said. "I also had problems there."



Julia Mancuso of the United States waves her national flag as she celebrates placing third in the super-G in the Alpine Ski World Championships in Santa Caterina Valfurva, Italy, on Sunday.

Hilke Gerg of Germany also had a difficult turn that left her 1.43 back.

"Even with an error-free run today, it was not possible for the later starters," Gerg said. Three Italians finished in the top five, with Nadia Panchini fourth in 1:18.43 and Isolde Kostner fifth in 1:18.54.

Paerson won last season's overall World

Cup title largely on her strength in the technical disciplines. She also is the defending slalom and giant slalom World Cup champion. She has won only two World Cup races this season, a slalom in Maribor, Slovenia, this month and the season-opening giant slalom in Soelden, Austria.

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Steady Ogilvie still atop Hope field

The Associated Press

LA QUINTA, Calif. — Although different parts of Joe Ogilvie's game have come and gone this week, he's managed to hold it together enough to stay in front.

His short game was solid and his tee shots shaky much of the first three rounds of the five-day Bob Hope Chrysler Classic, but things changed Saturday as he shot a 3-under 69.

At 26-under 262, the front-running Ogilvie maintained a two-shot lead over Peter Lonard of Australia.

"Yesterday I drove it extremely poorly. Today I drove it extremely well," Ogilvie said. "Yesterday I hit a lot of good iron shots and putted well. Today I hit no decent iron shots and hit a lot of good putts but didn't give myself a lot of opportunities."

The key to his 69, by three

Golf roundup

shots the highest round of his first four days of the tournament, was the way he mastered the par 5s at La Quinta Country Club.

He rolled in a 12-foot putt for an eagle after reaching the green with his 3-wood on the 512-yard No. 11, and sank shorter birdie putts on two other par 5s.

Ogilvie, who has appeared relaxed the entire week while either tied for the lead or alone atop the leader board, smiled and waved to the crowd when his eagle putt dropped.

He barely missed birdie putts on several other holes.

"I had four or five lip-outs, but they were all from 18 to 25 feet, so I really didn't hit the ball great with my irons, which kind of surprised me," said Ogilvie, looking

for his first tour victory.

Lonard also shot a 69 to remain alone in second place. Former British Open champion Justin Leonard was another stroke back after a 64 that left him 23 under. Tim Clark had a 66 and was fourth at 266.

Defending champion Phil Mickelson, who also won the Hope in 2002, had a 68 and was in a group at 268, six shots off the pace.

Ogilvie's best finish on the tour is a second-place tie with Mickelson at New Orleans last year. Ogilvie was leading heading into the final nine holes, but Vijay Singh shot a 29 on the back nine to win.

Asked what he learned from that, Ogilvie said, "That no lead is safe. I'm going to have to go low tomorrow. There's not going to be a whole lot of conservative play out from me." Lonard, 37, the winner of a string of titles in Australia but

none in America, has eight top-10 finishes on the PGA Tour, including a third place during his rookie season of 2002.

Calling the courses used for the Hope "user-friendly," Lonard laughed about his fourth round at La Quinta, saying, "It wasn't very good today, but I bumbled my way through."

Leonard reeled off six birdies over his final nine holes during the fourth round, including a 30-footer on No. 12, to vault into contention. He has won eight PGA titles, including the 1997 British Open.

Craig Stadler, who won the 1980 Hope for his first tour victory, had moved into contention with a third-round 65, but had a fourth-round 71 to drop back into the pack at 271. Fred Couples also was in that group after a 68.

The tour players were grouped with amateurs for the first four



AP

Joe Ogilvie tips his hat to the gallery on the 18th green during the fourth round of the Bob Hope Classic on Saturday. Ogilvie shot a 3-under 69 to maintain his lead.

days of the tournament, with the field cut to the low 70 pros and ties for Sunday's final round at PGA West.

Dougherty wins Caltech Masters

SINGAPORE — England's Nick Dougherty won his first PGA European Tour title Sunday, shooting a 5-under 67 for a five-stroke victory in the Caltech Masters.

The 22-year-old Dougherty had an 18-under 270 total on the Laguna National's Masters Course. Scotland's Colin Montgomerie, the 2004 winner, closed with a 70 to tie for second with Dutchman Maarten Laferber (69).

Denmark's Thomas Bjorn (72) finished fourth at 111 under in the tournament co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour.

"I'm absolutely delighted. When you're playing with Colin and Thomas, you really don't think it's over until it's over," Dougherty said after his bogey-free round. "Hopefully this is start of many great things to come."

Dougherty took control on the 16th hole, hitting his approach shot to 3 feet to set up a birdie that gave him a three-stroke lead. Montgomerie, a stroke back after the 15th, three-putted for a bogey on No. 16.

"All in all, I think I just about played good enough golf today," Dougherty said.

Irwin leads at Turtle Bay after bogey-free round

KAHUKU, Hawaii — Four-time defending champion Hale Irwin shot a bogey-free 6-under 66 to take a two-stroke lead over Allen Doyle after two rounds of the Turtle Bay Championship.

The 59-year-old Irwin is trying to win his fifth straight and third overall victory at Turtle Bay, the Champions Tour's first full-field event of the year.

Irwin putted just 23 times and had six birdies in a steady round, moving to 11-under 133.

Doyle had just one bogey in his second round, getting three birdies on the front nine and three on the back for a 4-under 68 and a 9-under 135 total.

Dana Quigley, coming off a win at the MasterCard Championship last week, shot a 68 and was tied for third with Keith Ferguson (69) and Morgan three strokes back Don Pooley (67) and Larry Nelson (68) were at 137. Jerry Pate (67), Don Reese (68), Tom McKnight (68), Dick Mast (69) and Wayne Levi (70) were in 138.

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Illini reach 21-0; Carolina enjoys 15-0 rout

The Associated Press

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Roger Powell Jr. scored 21 points and Deron Williams added 18, leading top-ranked Illinois to an 89-66 victory over Minnesota on Saturday.

The Illini (21-0, 7-0 Big Ten) opened the game with a 10-1 run and stretched their conference winning streak to 17 games, tying a school record set from 1914-16. James Augustine had 15 points and seven rebounds, and Luther Head scored 10.

Minnesota (14-6, 4-3) had trouble with the Illini defense from the start. The Golden Gophers were led by Vincent Grier, who scored 17 points.

No. 3 North Carolina 110, Virginia 76: North Carolina ended five years of frustration at Charlottesville, Va., by blowing out Virginia.

Jawad Williams scored 23 points on 8-for-10 shooting, Sean May had 20 and Raymond Felton 16 for the Tar Heels (17-2, 6-1 Atlantic Coast Conference), who won for only the fourth time in the last 11 games against Virginia. North Carolina hadn't won in Charlottesville since Feb. 20, 1999.

Carolina led 62-26 at halftime, shot 60 percent for the game and outrebounded the Cavaliers 45-26. J.J. Reynolds led Virginia (10-8, 1-7) with 18 points.

No. 5 Wake Forest 94, Miami 82: At Winston-Salem, N.C., Eric Williams had 23 points and 11 rebounds and reserve Trent Strickland added 13 points, helping Wake Forest beat Miami despite getting only eight points from star guard Chris Paul.

Jason Gray finished with 20 points and the Demon Deacons (17-3, 5-2 Atlantic Coast Conference) cruised in the second half to improve to 10-0 at home less than 48 hours after a heart-breaking, overtime loss at Georgia Tech. Jamaal Levy scored 15 points.

Anthony Harris scored 28 points for Miami (13-6, 4-4) and Guillermo Diaz had 21.



Kansas' Aaron Miles, foreground, and J.R. Giddens celebrate the Jayhawks' romp over Texas on Saturday.

No. 6 Kansas 90, No. 16 Texas 65: At Lawrence, Kan., Wayne Simien scored 27 points and Kansas handed Rick Barnes his worst Big 12 loss as Longhorns coach.

The Longhorns (15-5, 4-3), down to eight scholarship players because of injuries and academic problems, were never in it, falling to 0-5 in Allen Fieldhouse since the Big 12 was formed in 1996.

Texas committed a season-high 20 turnovers against the Jayhawks (16-1, 6-0).

No. 7 Kentucky 68, Arkansas 67: At Fayetteville, Ark., Patrick Sparks hit what proved to be the deciding basket with 24.2 seconds left as Kentucky (16-2, 7-0 Southeastern Conference) held on.

Eric Ferguson countered Sparks' shot with a three-pointer, pulling Arkansas within a point.

The Wildcats' Chuck Hayes missed a free throw, and Ferguson got the rebound but missed a three-point try at the buzzer.

Ronnie Brewer had 18 for Arkansas (14-6, 2-5).

No. 8 Boston College 64, Georgetown 49: At Boston, Craig Smith had 20 points and eight rebounds, and unbeaten Boston College shut out Georgetown for a 15-minute span in the first half.

Jared Dudley scored 13 for BC (18-0, 7-0 Big East), which is one shy of the longest winning streak in school history — 19 straight in 1968-69.

Brandon Bowman scored 16 points for Georgetown (13-6, 5-3). The Hoyas, who lost for just the third time in 12 games, haven't beaten a top 10 team since 1996.

No. 12 Louisville 105, Tulane 69: At New Orleans, Francisco Garcia had 21 points to lead six double-figure scorers as the Cardinals (18-3, 6-2 Conference USA) routed Tulane (8-11, 2-6).

The Cardinals won their seventh straight game and 12th in the last 13. Louisville has won by an average of 32.9 points during its winning streak.

Iowa St. 74, No. 13 Oklahoma 66: At Ames, Iowa, Curtis Stinson scored 23 points and Iowa State (9-8, 1-5 Big 12) relied on its short-range game to end a 10-game winning streak by Oklahoma (16-3, 5-1).

Jared Homan added 14 points for Iowa State, which did not make a basket outside 10 feet but outscored the Sooners 48-28 inside.

Tai Gray led Oklahoma with 21 points.

No. 15 Michigan St. 92, Oakland, Mich. 75: At East Lansing, Mich., Maurice Ager scored 22 points and Michigan State (14-3) pulled away in the second half in its final tuneup for Tuesday's Big Ten showdown with Illinois.

No. 17 Gonzaga 91, Portland 79: At Spokane, Wash., J.P. Batista had 25 points and 12 rebounds and Gonzaga (15-4, 5-2 West Coast Conference) made 34 of 39 free throws to withstand a second-half rally by Portland (13-9, 2-5).

Portland (13-9, 2-5), the last WCC team to beat Gonzaga at home, trailed by as many as 14 in the first half but held several leads in the second half before fading. Pooi Jeter led the Pilots with 22 points.

No. 18 Wisconsin 76, Penn St. 50: At State College, Pa., Kamron Taylor scored 20 points as Wisconsin (14-4, 5-2 Big Ten) beat Penn State (7-13, 1-6). The Badgers bounced back after a loss to top-ranked Illinois that ended a 38-game home winning streak.

Aaron Johnson had 17 points and 11 rebounds for Penn State.

No. 21 Cincinnati 87, Houston 68: At Cincinnati, James White scored a career-high 25 points, making every type of shot, and added 10 rebounds to lead Cincinnati (17-3, 6-1 Conference USA) over Houston (12-9, 3-4).

Jason Maxwell also had 10 rebounds, 14 points and eight blocks, helping the Bearcats roll to their 10th straight victory over a team they traditionally dominate. Houston is 1-22 against Cincinnati, which leaves next season for the Big East.

No. 23 Iowa 72, Indiana 57: At Iowa City, Pierre Pierce, one of four Iowa starters benched at the beginning of the game for lackluster play, scored 25 points to lead the Hawkeyes (19-5, 3-4 Big Ten) past Indiana (9-9, 4-3).

LSU 69, No. 24 Mississippi St. 62: At Baton Rouge, La., Brandon Bass had 26 points and 11 rebounds as LSU (11-6, 4-2 SEC) handled Mississippi State (16-5, 4-3) and star Lawrence Roberts, who was limited to 15 points.

Air Force wins 23rd straight home game

The Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Jacob Buttschi scored 16 points and Air Force beat San Diego State 62-50 on Saturday night, the Falcons' 23rd straight victory at home.

Air Force (13-7, 4-1 Mountain West) moved into sole possession of second place in the conference by extending the nation's second-longest home winning streak. The Falcons started cold from three-point range and trailed by a point at the half.

Air Force's Nick Welch, who finished with 10 points, made a layup with 13:48 left in the game to start a 10-1 run for the Falcons.

A three-pointer by Tim Keller put Air Force up 41-30 with 10:10 left to play.

A three-pointer by Marc Holum with 9:14 to play started another run that ended with a three-pointer by Matt McCraw at 2:41 that gave Air Force a 54-37 advantage over the Aztecs (9-9, 3-2).

Keller finished with 12 points and McCraw 11. Buttschi also contributed on defense with five defensive rebounds and four steals.

The Falcons missed 11 of 15 three-pointers in the first half and trailed by a point at halftime, but hit six of 11 from long range after intermission while pulling away.



Air Force's Nick Welch goes up for a shot during Saturday's 62-50 win over San Diego State.

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Apparently no deficit too big for Pitt

By ALAN ROBINSON

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Syracuse couldn't have asked for a better start as it tried to become the first visiting team to win in successive seasons in Pitt's new arena. The Orange's biggest mistake was letting the game get away long before the final whistle.

Carl Krauser and Chevon Troutman led Pittsburgh's second consecutive comeback from a 17-point deficit against a ranked opponent, withstanding long scoreless stretches to drive the No. 20 Panthers to a 76-69 victory over fourth-ranked Syracuse on Saturday night.

Pittsburgh, rallying much as it did the previous Saturday in beating then-No. 16 Connecticut 76-66, took command by holding Syracuse scoreless for 6½ minutes in a 13-0 run midway through the second half. The Orange (22-2, 7-1 Big East) opened a 22-5 lead by holding Pitt to two field goals in the first 10 minutes. Syracuse ended Pitt's 40-game home winning streak last season by becoming the first visiting team to win in the Petersen Events Center, which opened for the 2002-03 season.

"It didn't feel like we were down 17," Pitt's

Levon Kendall said. "We made a lot of mental mistakes that gave them open shots, and we knew that if we played as well as we could, it wouldn't be a problem coming back. It wasn't anything to get worried about."

Apparently not. Krauser got all of his 19 points in the second half after not scoring for nearly 23 minutes and Troutman, held scoreless for the first 14½ minutes, had 18 points and nine rebounds for Pitt (14-3, 4-2). The Panthers out rebounded Syracuse 39-28.

Keith Benjamin, a seldom-used freshman guard who had scored only two points in Pitt's previous 13 games, keyed the comeback by coming off the bench for 10 points — as many as he had all season.

"It's been a long wait to go out there and show what I could do," said Benjamin, who was slowed earlier by a foot injury. "Coach (Jamie Dixon) gave me an opportunity and I wanted to bring some energy to the team."

Gerry McNamara scored 26 points and Hakim Warrick had 25, but no other Syracuse player scored more than four as the Orange's 13-game winning streak ended. McNamara went 14 minutes without a bas-

ket during the second half before hitting three late three-pointers.

"We can't win with only two guys scoring — we need better balance," Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim said. "People are going to do what they can to take Gerry and Hakim away, and we need our other guys in those situations. Two guys are not going to win a game in this league."

Boeheim felt the game swung when the Panthers went into a 2-3 zone in the second half — Syracuse's preferred defense — but the Orange still couldn't get open shots.

"We actually wanted them to play the zone, we made shots and we couldn't," Boeheim said. "Our failure to attack the zone was our biggest shortcoming."

Pitt was 13-for-26 in the second half to Syracuse 10-for-28.

McNamara was in double figures with 10 points before Pitt made its second field goal of the game, but Benjamin came off the bench to hit two quick baskets and sent the Panthers on a 22-9 run that cut Syracuse's lead to 31-27.

Pitt tied it for the first time at 38 on Krauser's second three-point in two possessions before Syracuse answered with a quick 6-0 run for a 44-38 lead.

Benjamin's three-point and two free throws and Aaron Gray's tap-in started a 13-0 run that put Pitt up by seven. At that point Pitt had outscored Syracuse 46-22 since trailing by 17.

Dixon went to Benjamin mostly out of desperation after freshman guard Ronald Ramon quickly drew three fouls and starting guard Antonio Graves had trouble getting open shots. Graves failed to score in nine minutes.

"We had a lot of sophomores and freshmen out there and guys who hadn't played a lot, but they played like they had been there in those situations," Dixon said.

The Panthers had lost three of five, including successive home games to Bucknell and Georgetown, before beating Connecticut and Syracuse. The turnaround began when Krauser began cutting down on his turnovers and quit forcing shots.

"In the first half I was looking for my teammates and letting the game come to me," Krauser said. "In the second half I felt a sense of urgency to get things going."

The Orange, the highest-ranked opponent to play at the Petersen Center, were playing their first ranked opponent since then-No. 5 Oklahoma State 74-60 on Dec. 7.

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Kelati's stars lift Cougars over Cats

By BOB BAUM

The Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — Four of the Washington State players on the court Saturday were not born the day the Cougars beat Arizona. Two others were barely in diapers.

So Washington State's 70-63 stunner over the 11th-ranked Wildcats — at McKale Center, no less — was downright historic.

The Cougars ended a 38-game losing streak to coach Lute Olson's Arizona team.

"I can't remember the last time I was this happy," said Thomas Kelati, who sank a career-high seven three-pointers and matched his career best with 27 points. "I returned to that locker room, coach was in tears, players were in tears. This feels good."

Kelati's final three-pointer with 50.4 seconds to play put Washington State ahead for good at 66-63. He then sealed the victory by making two free throws with 32.1 seconds left.

"The thing I learned when I went to Washington State is there are too many negative streaks," said Dick Bennett, the ex-Wisconsin coach in his second season with the Cougars. "Every time you play you are facing one."

The Cougars erased a number of them on Saturday.

Washington State (9-9, 4-5 Pac-10) last beat the Wildcats on Jan. 30, 1986, 65-63 in overtime in Pullman. Washington State broke a 20-game losing streak in Tucson and defeated a ranked opponent for the first time in 49 tries.

It was only Washington State's fifth road victory over a ranked team and first in 27 games. Arizona was the highest-rated opponent to fall among those five. The Wildcats looked as if they might pull it out after a steal led to Mustafa Shakur's breakout

stuff that tied it at 63 with 1:12 remaining. But the Cougars scored the last seven points of the game.

Kelati, 7-foot-9 from three-point range, sank his final three to put Washington State up for good. After Salim Stoudamire missed a three-pointer, Kelati was fouled and made the two free throws to seal Washington State's upset.

Arizona (17-4, 7-2) came out flat for the noon tipoff after an intense 91-82 victory over No. 10 Washington on Thursday night. That victory had put the Wildcats alone in first place in the Pac-10, but Washington State opened the way for Washington to reclaim a share of lead on Sunday at Arizona State.

"Our hearts were not in it," Arizona center Channing Frye said. "We need to go back and focus in practice and understand where we are, and where we want to go."

Shakur led Arizona with 12 points. Ivan Radovic had 11 points and 10 rebounds, and Frye scored 11 but had only two rebounds.

Stoudamire — among the top shooters in the country over the last month — was 4-for-14 shooting, 0-for-5 from three-point range. He scored 11. Hassan Adams scored 10.

Olson was especially upset with his experienced players.

"The veterans should know better," he said. "They should know that if you've got Arizona on your jersey, Washington State was going to come out and play its best game. They outplayed us, they outthrew us."

Freshmen Derek Low and Robbie Cowgill — among those not born the last time the Cougars beat Arizona — had season highs of 13 and 12 points, respectively. Low was 4-for-4 from three-pointers.

SPORTS



Air Force beats
San Diego St. to extend
home win streak, Page 34

Wicked awesome

Boston sports fans finally have something to brag about in more than one sport

BY SYLVIA LEE WINGFIELD

The Associated Press

BOSTON — It's time for Boston sports fans to gloat for a change.

Heck, the Boston Red Sox finally conquered the New York Yankees and then won a World Series. Now the New England Patriots are trying to win their third Super Bowl in four years.

"It doesn't get any better, it really doesn't," said novelist Stewart O'Nan, who collaborated with his friend and fellow Red Sox fan, horror writer Stephen King, on "Faithful," a diary of the 2004 Red Sox season.

Last year began with the Patriots winning the Super Bowl. Then from spring through summer, fans watched as the

Red Sox rebounded from occasional losing streaks only to keep getting better.

They'd grown accustomed to the usual swan dive after the All-Star break. But this time the team went on a tear. Could it actually happen? Could this be "the year" for which generations of die-hard fans had pined? Fall usually brought heartbreak to Boston baseball fans. This time, it brought unmeasurable joy.

The Sox came back from a 3-0 hole in the ALCS to win four straight against the hated Yankees, then swept St. Louis in four games to win the title, their first in 86 years.

It's all made for a fun year for the city's long-suffering fans.

"Everybody's ecstatic," said Adam Herzlich, a Boston bartender holding off the January chill on Thursday with a Patriots watch cap.

"People who weren't Pats fans a few years ago are now. My mother's even watched the playoffs. She hasn't watched that much football since she watched me play," at Brookline High School, he said.

There's more.

The Boston College men's basketball team is one of only two undefeated college teams in the country, and is now ranked No. 8 in The Associated Press rankings. The BC women's basketball team is also in the AP Top 25, and the men's hockey team is ranked No. 1.

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New England
Patriots
quarterback
Tom Brady



AP photos

Above: Boston College's Craig Smith reacts as he scores against Georgetown in the first half Saturday. BC is ranked No. 8 in The Associated Press poll and is one of only two undefeated men's teams in the country. Left: The Boston Red Sox ended decades of misery for their fans by winning their first World Series in 86 years.



Russia's Safin
earns second
Slam title with
win over crowd
favorite Hewitt in
Australian Open

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Francis scores
32 points
to help lead
Magic to sweep
of Wizards

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Ogilvie hangs on
to two-stroke
edge heading into
final round
of Hope Classic

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